

SELECTED SHORT STORIES

BY

JOHN GALSWORTHY

16038.
— 184

Acc. No.	16038
Class No.	F.7.
Book No.	366

SELECTED
SHORT STORIES BY
JOHN GALSWORTHY

EDITED
WITH AN INTRODUCTION
AND NOTES

With frontispiece



LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
CALCUTTA ♦ BOMBAY ♦ MADRAS

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO., LTD.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.4
6 OLD COURT HOUSE STREET, CALCUTTA

53 NICOL ROAD, BOMBAY
36A MOUNT ROAD, MADRAS

First published March 1935
New Impression February 1937

Acc. No.	16038
Class No.	F. 7.
Book No.	366

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	vii
ELEVEN TALES BY GALSWORTHY :	
THE MAN WHO KEPT HIS FORM (1920)	1
A PORTRAIT (1910)	21
QUALITY (1911)*	44
THE BLACK GODMOTHER (1912)	55
PEACE MEETING (1917)	63
THE BROKEN BOOT (1922)	72
ACME (1923)	79
THE BUCKLES OF SUPERIOR DOSSET, 1821-1863	89
A SAD AFFAIR, 1867	105
REVOLT AT ROGER'S, 1870	123
SOAMES AND THE FLAG, 1914-1918	138
NOTES	183

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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INTRODUCTION

IF the question were asked of an Englishman by a foreigner, 'Which of your writers would give me the best idea of your nation at the present time and during the last thirty years?' the probable answer would be, 'Either Wells or Galsworthy. Wells, if you want to know the average man in the street and his ideas and feelings; Galsworthy, if you want to know the propertied classes, the intelligentia and professional people, and a great deal too about the working classes from the upper class point of view.'

This is, of course, the kind of summary judgment that would have to be made on the spot in answer to a sudden question. It does not attempt to estimate all the work of H. G. Wells—his very important scientific romances, for instance—nor does it include all of Galsworthy by any means, but it does penetrate to the heart of the question as to where the twentieth-century English man and woman is to be found most clearly and fully depicted in literature, and it does fairly accurately distinguish between the different contributions

to that picture made by two of our foremost painters of the English social life of our time.

It depends, then, which part of English society is regarded as the more typical of the whole or as the more interesting personally. If the middle class of small business men and those just beneath that level, then Wells' Mr. Britling and Kipps will probably be chosen ; if, on the other hand, one thinks that upper middle class people, more accustomed to decide for themselves and less controlled by newspapers and mass-opinion, are truer of the English mentality, then one must turn to Galsworthy in order to know what is English. There is room, in fact, for both of our greatest modern novelists, very diverse as they are, and the work of each rounds off that of the other writer with fair completeness.

A similar comparison might be made of their styles of writing, for while Wells' manner of writing is fluent, often redundant, very close to everyday talk, at its worst a high kind of journalism and at its best an inspired wielding of the pen which even the stolidest reader will allow to whirl him to its destination before he looks back and considers the road by which it has carried him, Galsworthy's, on the other hand, is a style developed and perfected with long care—' I was writing fiction for five years before I could master even its primary technique ' is a statement of his. It obtains its effects by means which are often so subtle as not to be noticeable till they are

reflected upon or pointed out. Each of these writers has, in fact, forged for himself an instrument ideally suited both to his natural temperament and to his method of delineating human nature, whether it be Wells' flair for catching the passing interests and theories of men and making them show what the modern man is like, or Galsworthy's eye for the rooted and permanent human characteristics, which he delicately constrains to reveal themselves in the actions and words of his characters in just the unconscious way in which they are revealed in daily life.

In matter and style, as well as in the place they have won for themselves as novelists in their generation, Wells and Galsworthy resemble the master-novelists of the mid-nineteenth century, Dickens and Thackeray; for Dickens drew his characters from the same classes as does Wells and cared even less for form in his writing so long as he obtained the immediate effects he wanted, while Thackeray's *Pendennis*, *Newcomes* and *Esmonds* might almost be ancestors of Galsworthy's *Forsytes* and *Charwells*, and the artistry of the earlier writer is as finished and yet as difficult to analyse as that of his successor.

Leaving aside Wells and his work, there is one more respect in which Galsworthy resembles Thackeray. Both men disliked personal publicity and preferred to be two totally distinct beings in one, the novelist known to the world as the author of such and such works and the private

gentleman known among his friends. Thackeray was so resolved to prevent a biography of himself being written that he destroyed the materials for such a work which were in his hands, and all we have are a few glimpses of himself in his works and certain sketches of him as clubman, as editor and as friend. Of Galsworthy, too, it is not likely that materials for a full-length biography exist. He had more public activities than Thackeray, and we know already something of him as President of the P.E.N. international fraternity of poets, essayists and novelists and of his occasional appearances at public functions designed to promote goodwill and understanding. Of the man Galsworthy himself, of spiritual struggles, of secrets of growth or revolutions of thought or feeling in him aroused by contacts or circumstances we shall have probably nothing more than we have now, which is an impression of an English gentleman, apparently unemotional because he put a strong restraint on a natural keen sensibility to both beauty and suffering. He came of a well-to-do Devon family with a long history and received the education of an English gentleman at Harrow and New College, Oxford. That he played in the football XI at school and became captain and, again, appeared 'lazy, dressy and sporting' to acquaintances at the university rather marks him as belonging to his class than as being in any way exceptional. He had evidently not found himself when he went down from Oxford with a degree in law and was

called to the Bar. Instead of practising, he travelled all over the world—he was in Russia, Egypt, the Fiji Islands, the United States, Canada, Australia and Cape Colony. One wonders when the artist in him awoke, and under what circumstances. This mystery is no more to be probed from the material we have at present than the awakening of the creator in Joseph Conrad, whom Galsworthy met at this time on a sailing ship between Adelaide and South Africa with the manuscript of his first novel, *Almayer's Folly*, still unpublished.

Even when, at the age of thirty, Galsworthy published his first novel, *From the Four Winds*, in 1897, it was done diffidently and under the pseudonym of John Sinjohn, and so also with the next three works till 1901. Not till 1904 and *The Island Pharisees* was he sure enough of his calling as a writer to come out in print under his own name. Evidently a self-critical and fastidious nature, the first of his ancient family to venture into this domain of artistic expression and restrained by all his ancestral bonds from anything precipitate or, above all, in the nature of a display. His forefathers—if they were like the Forsytes—might have thought of a novelist as 'a writing fellow,' but here was one of their blood who wrote and still remained the impenetrable gentleman.

With 1906 and the first of the Forsyte novels, *The Man of Property*, Galsworthy was properly launched and had found his true course as the

depictor of the upper class bourgeoisie of England in her expansive days from about 1860 to the War of 1914, and then of the adjustments of their latest generation to the hard and altered post-War era. This study of the Forsyte family developed, through the next twenty-five years, into a triple trilogy of nine novels interspersed with preludes which forms the most sustained connected unit in English imaginative prose. It contains at once the fullest expression of Galsworthy's powers in their maturity, the most surprising array of figures from one well-to-do family through three generations and the subtlest presentation of their settled habits of thought and of the impinging upon these of personalities and events most likely to unsettle them.

Galsworthy belongs to the small group of writers who have succeeded supremely in more than one literary form. His work in the drama is as well known and as great as in the novel, and yet the appeal of his plays is quite different from that of his stories. Beginning in 1906 with *The Silver Box*, his plays enjoyed a steady and often striking success on the stage, for they are exceedingly well adapted to acting in modern naturalistic settings and they present clear-cut characters, speaking a forceful English of everyday, and successions of situations with all the suspense necessary to carry even a first-night audience through on the tiptoe of expectancy to the end. Characters, situations and endings are usually chosen to present some inequity, amounting often

to definite wrong, in society, the half-blind struggles of men and women in the presence of that inequity and the result of these struggles, which is frequently as unsatisfactory an ending—being no ending at all, for it leaves the wrong just where it was in the beginning—as actually happens in real life, where people and conditions generally remain the same in spite of all struggles against them. So *The Silver Box* depicts the law in relation to rich and poor, *Strife* the sterile destructiveness of industrial disputes, *Escape* the human animal-pack (with honourable exceptions) in pursuit of a fellow-creature, *The Skin Game* the tangled evil of industrial exploitation of Africa and Imperialist politics.

Besides these two main divisions of his work, Galsworthy has left us minor but still very valuable proofs of his powers in poem, essay, article and short story. Of short stories there are enough by themselves to make the artistic fortune of a writer. They are not merely chips from his workshop; five are quite long studies, and even the shortest of the remainder is a perfect unit in itself. They may be classified, according to matter, as either belonging to the Forsyte cycle or not, but, whether treating some member of that family or another human being who is no blood-relation, the story in question devotes the like detailed interest to the person, his situation, the complication that causes the story and the end of it all—or rather, the typical Galsworthian issue, which is not an end but often

a restatement of the beginning, which now looks very different from what it did at first.

The technique of the short story—human being, situation, complication, result (if possible with still another twist in the tail)—is well enough known, and the form suits the modern mind admirably. In ordinary hands, it may degenerate rapidly into a slick performance with just the requisite ingredients of suspense and ‘kick,’ but it often leaves the reader with a dissipated feeling. A succession of such stories is too much like a cocktail party. They thrill or exhilarate or amuse, and that is all.

With Galsworthy, however, each story is not only packed with records of a long and patient observation of men, but also arranged so as to stir the deeper levels of thought and feeling by presenting human beings—and sometimes animals—at strife with, and often borne down by, their environment. This environment often takes the form of conventions and attitudes taken up by society for its own comfort or advancement, and it is when a single human being—or an animal—is faced by, and faces up to, the hostility of the crowd, or opposes some personal ideal to the hostility of circumstances, that Galsworthy obtains some of his most powerful effects and is most likely to awaken what is called the social conscience in the reader. So, among the stories in this volume, one is stirred in *The Man Who Kept His Form* by Miles Ruding’s fidelity to an ideal of ‘form’—implanted by centuries of breeding—through

hard times and unmerited disasters which would have disintegrated any man but one of his type ; so, in *Quality*, we see the real artist-craftsman persisting in his love of fine workmanship even to death before the inflow of modern industrialism, or, in *The Black Godmother*, a miserable dog done to death by successive attacks from men and boys driven by fear for their own safety. *The Broken Boot* describes the long and hopeless struggle with standards of external respectability that the casually employed actor has to carry on. Among the Forsyte stories, *Revolt at Roger's* is a picture of conflict—humorous and delightful, of course—in the limited society of a household between the older and younger Victorian generations, and the point of *The Buckles of Superior Dosset*—which has to be driven home again in *A Sad Affair*—is the different standards of honour between two generations, while *Soames and the Flag* is a long and subtle study of the reactions of an intensely individualistic and self-contained man to the surges of popular emotion during the intensely disturbed days of the Great War.

Life, in fact, is a conflict requiring singular strength and harmony of qualities for a successful issue. Harmony especially is to be prized, and in *A Portrait*—which is not a short story but a character sketch—Galsworthy presents a figure, balanced, strong and lovable, of the conquering type of man, yet one who finds no pleasure in mere power over men or animals for its own sake, and cares for neither politics nor shooting. By

contrast, what a half-man is the writer in *Acme*, sympathetic figure though he is, whose serious literary efforts nobody reads and who can only touch both the springs of creation in himself and popular liking by a fluke ; or, again, the two pacifists in *Peace Meeting* who know themselves so little that their pacific ideas and their natural passions can collide so unexpectedly to themselves and so ridiculously to us and others. Yet these half-men are no freaks, but very like the great mass of people.

With Galsworthy we are in the company and under the guidance of one who saw men and life clearly and without perversion, as far as that is humanly possible, and who, to delineate what he saw, created a style as free from mannerism and as limpid as his vision was clear. He was not one, on the other hand, who stood outside or above the world he observed, neither dissecting nor censuring nor even indifferently portraying ; he was not a scientist, a moralist, nor an æsthete, but a man among men, with the gift of getting outside himself and watching others, and a second, uncommoner gift of converting what he saw into English prose as near a standard as anyone could hope to reach.

THE MAN WHO KEPT HIS FORM

IN these days every landmark is like Alice's flamingo-croquet-mallet—when you refer to it, the creature curls up into an interrogation mark and looks into your face ; and every cornerstone resembles her hedgehog-croquet-ball, which, just before you can use it, gets up and walks away. The old flavours of life are out of fashion, the old scents considered stale ; ' gentleman ' is a word to sneer at, and ' form ' a sign of idiocy.

And yet there are families in the British Isles in which gentility has persisted for hundreds of years, and though you may think me old-fashioned and romantic, I am convinced that such gentle-folk often have a certain quality, a kind of inner pluck bred into them, which is not to be despised at all.

This is why I tell you my recollections of Miles Ruding.

My first sight of him—if a new boy may look at a monitor—was on my rather wretched second day at a Public School. The three other pups who occupied an attic with me had gone out, and I was ruefully considering whether I had a right to any wall-space on which to hang two small

oleographs depicting very scarlet horsemen on very bay horses, jumping very brown hedges, which my mother had bought me, thinking they might be suitable to the manly taste for which Public Schools are celebrated. I had taken them out of my playbox, together with the photographs of my parents and eldest sister, and spread them all on the window-seat. I was gazing at the little show lugubriously when the door was opened by a boy in 'tails.'

'Hallo!' he said. 'You new?'

'Yes,' I answered in a mouselike voice.

'I'm Ruding. Head of the House. You get an allowance of two bob weekly when it's not stopped. You'll see the fagging lists on the board. You don't get any fagging the first fortnight. What's your name?'

'Bartlet.'

'Oh! Ah!' He examined a piece of paper in his hand. 'You're one of mine. How are you getting on?'

'Pretty well.'

'That's all right.' He seemed about to withdraw, so I asked him hastily: 'Please, am I allowed to hang these pictures?'

'Rather—any pictures you like. Let's look at them!' He came forward. When his eyes fell on the array, he said abruptly: 'Oh! Sorry!' and, taking up the oleos, he turned his back on the photographs. A new boy is something of a psychologist out of sheer fright, and

when he said 'Sorry!' because his eyes had fallen on the effigies of my people, I felt somehow that he couldn't be a beast. 'You got these at Tompkins,' he said. 'I had the same my first term. Not bad. I should put 'em up here.'

While he was holding them to the wall I took a 'squint' at him. He seemed to me of a fabulous height—about five feet ten, I suppose; thin, and bolt upright. He had a stick-up collar—'barmaids' had not yet come in—but not a very high one, and his neck was rather long. His hair was peculiar, dark and crisp, with a reddish tinge; and his dark-grey eyes were small and deep in, his cheekbones rather high, his cheeks thin and touched with freckles. His nose, chin, and cheekbones all seemed a little large for his face as yet. If I may put it so, there was a sort of unfinished finish about him. But he looked straight, and had a nice smile. -

'Well, young Bartlet,' he said, handing me back the pictures, 'buck up, and you'll be all right.'

I put away my photographs, and hung the oleos. Ruding! The name was familiar. Among the marriages in my family pedigree, such as '—daughter of Fitzherbert,' 'daughter of Tastborough,' occurred the entry: 'daughter of Ruding'—some time before the Civil War. Daughter of Ruding! This demigod might be a far-off kinsman. But I felt I should never dare to tell him of the coincidence.

Miles Ruding was not brilliant, but pretty

good at everything. He was not well dressed—you did not think of dress in connection with him either one way or the other. He was not exactly popular—being reserved, far from showy, and not rich—but he had no ‘side,’ and never either patronised or abused his juniors. He was not indulgent to himself or others, but he was very just ; and, unlike many monitors, seemed to take no pleasure in ‘whopping.’ He never fell off in ‘trials’ at the end of a term, and was always playing as hard at the finish of a match as at the start. One would have said he had an exacting conscience, but he was certainly the last person to mention such a thing. He never showed his feelings, yet he never seemed trying to hide them, as I used always to be. He was greatly respected without seeming to care ; an independent, self-dependent bird, who would have cut a greater dash if he hadn’t been so, as it were, uncreative. In all those two years I only had one at all intimate talk with him, which, after all, was perhaps above the average number, considering the difference in our ages. In my fifth term and Ruding’s last but one, there had been some disciplinary rumpus in the house, which had hurt the dignity of the captain of the football ‘torpid’ eleven—a big Irish boy who played back and was the mainstay of the side. It happened on the eve of our first house match, and the sensation may be imagined when this important person refused to play ; physically and spiritually sore, he declared for the

part of Achilles and withdrew to his tent. The house rocked with pro and con. My sympathies, in common with nearly all below the second fifth, lay with Donelly against the sixth form. His defection had left me captain of the side, so that the question whether we could play at all depended on me. If I declared a sympathetic strike, the rest would follow. That evening, after long hours of '*fronde*' with other rebellious spirits, I was alone and still in two minds, when Ruding came into my room. He leaned against the door, and said: 'Well, Bartlet, *you're* not going to rat?'

'I—I don't think Donelly ought to have been—been whopped,' I stammered.

'That's as may be,' he said, 'but the house comes first. You know that.'

Torn between the loyalties, I was silent.

'Look here, young Bartlet,' he said suddenly, 'it'll be a disgrace to us all, and it hangs on you.'

'All right,' I said sulkily, 'I'll play.'

'Good chap!'

'But I don't think Donelly ought to have been whopped,' I repeated inanely; 'he's—he's too big.'

Ruding approached till he looked right down on me in my old '*froust*,' as we called armchairs. 'One of these days,' he said slowly, 'you'll be head of the house yourself. You'll have to keep up the prestige of the sixth form. If you let great louts like Donelly cheek little weak six-formers

with impunity' (I remember how impressed I was by the word), 'you'll let the whole show down. My old governor runs a district in Bengal, about as big as Wales, entirely on prestige. He's often talked to me about it. I hate whopping anybody, but I'd much rather whop a lout like Donnelly than I would a little new chap. He's a swine, anyway, for turning the house down because his back is sore.'

'It isn't that,' I said, 'it—it wasn't just.'

'If it was unjust,' said Ruding, with what seems to me now extraordinary patience, 'then the whole system's wrong, and that's a pretty big question, young Bartlet. Anyway, it's not for me to decide. I've got to administer what is. Shake hands, and do your damndest to-morrow, won't you?'

I put out my hand with a show of reluctance, though secretly won over.

We got an awful hiding, but I can still hear Ruding's voice yelling: 'Well played, Bartlet! Well pla-a-ayed!'

I have only one other school recollection of Miles Ruding which lets any real light in on him. On the day he left for good I happened to travel up to Town in the same carriage. He sat looking through the window back at the old Hill, and I distinctly saw a tear run down his cheek. He must have been conscious that I had remarked the phenomenon, for he said suddenly:

'Damn! I've got a grit in my eye,' and began

to pull the eyelid down in a manner which did not deceive me in the least.

I then lost sight of him completely for several years. His people were not well off, and he did not go up to the 'Varsity. He once said to me : 'My family's beastly old, and beastly poor.'

It was during one of my Odysseys in connection with sport that I saw him again. He was growing fruit on a ranch in Vancouver Island. Nothing used to strike a young Englishman travelling in the Colonies more than the difference between what he saw and what all printed matter led him to expect. When I ran across Ruding in the Club at Victoria and he invited me to stay with him, I expected rows of fine trees with large pears and apples hanging on them, a colonial house with a broad verandah, and Ruding in ducks, among rifles and fishing rods, and spirited horses. What I found was a bare new wooden house, not yet painted, in a clearing of the heavy forest. His fruit trees had only just been planted, and he would be lucky if he got a crop within three years. He wore, not white ducks, but blue jeans, and worked about twelve hours a day, felling timber and clearing fresh ground. He had one horse to ride and drive, and got off for a day's shooting or fishing about once a month. He had three Chinese boys working under him, and lived nearly as sparingly as they. He had been out of England eight years, and this was his second venture—the first in Southern California had

failed after three years of drought. He would be all right for water here, he said ; which seemed likely enough in a country whose rainfall is superior to that of England.

‘ How the devil do you stand the loneliness ? ’ I said.

‘ Oh ! one gets used to it. Besides, this isn’t lonely—good Lord, no ! You should see some places ! ’

Living this sort of life, he yet seemed exactly what he used to be—in fact, he had kept his form. He didn’t precisely dress for dinner, but he washed. He had English papers sent out to him, and read Victorian poetry, and history natural and unnatural, in the evenings over his pipe. He shaved every day, had his cold tub every morning, and treated his Chinese boys just as he used to treat us new boys at school ; so far as I could tell, they seemed to have for him much the feelings we used to have—a respect not amounting to fear, and a liking not quite rising to affection.

‘ I couldn’t live here without a woman,’ I said one evening.

He sighed. (‘ I don’t want to mess myself up with anything short of a wife ;) and I couldn’t ask a girl to marry me till the place is fit for her. This fruit-growing’s always a gamble at first.’

‘ You’re an idealist,’ I said.

He seemed to shrink, and it occurred to me suddenly that if there were anything he hated,

it would be a generalisation like that. But I was in a teasing mood.

‘You’re keeping up the prestige of the English gentleman.’

His teeth gritted on his pipe-stem. ‘I’m dashed if I’m keeping up anything except my end ; that’s quite enough.’

‘And exactly the same thing,’ I murmured.

He turned away. I felt he was much annoyed with me for trying to introduce him to self-consciousness. And he was right ! It’s destructive ; and his life held too many destructive elements—silence, solitude, distance from home, and this daily mixing with members of an Eastern race. I used to watch the faces of his Chinese boys—remote as cats, wonderfully carved, and old, and self-sufficient. I appreciate now how much of what was carved and old and self-sufficient Ruding needed in himself to live year in, year out, alone among them, without losing his form. All that week of my visit I looked with diabolical curiosity for some sign of deterioration—of the coarsening or softening which one felt ought naturally to come of such a life. Honestly, I could not find a trace, save that he wouldn’t touch whisky, as if he were afraid of it, and shied away at any mention of women.

‘Aren’t you ever coming home ?’ I asked when I was taking leave.

‘When I’ve made good here,’ he said, ‘I shall come back and marry.’

‘And then out again?’

‘I expect so. I’ve got no money, you know.’

Four years later I happened to see the following in *The Times*: ‘Ruding—Fuljambe: At St. Thomas’s, Market Harborough, Miles Ruding of Bear Ranch, Vancouver Island, to Blanche, daughter of Charles Fuljambe, J.P., Market Harborough.’ So it seemed he *had* made good! But I wondered what ‘daughter of Fuljambe’ would make of it out there. Well, I came across Ruding and his wife that very summer at Eastbourne, where they were spending the butt end of their long honeymoon. She was pleasant, pretty, vivacious—too vivacious I felt when I thought of Bear Ranch; and Ruding himself, under the stimulus of his new venture, was as nearly creative as I ever saw him. We dined and bathed, played tennis and went riding on the Downs together. Daughter of Fuljambe was quite ‘a sport’—though, indeed, in 1899 that word had hardly come into use. I confess to wondering why, exactly, she had married my friend, till she gave me the history of it one evening. It seems their families were old neighbours, and when Ruding came back after having been away in the New World for twelve years, he was something of a curiosity, if not of a hero. He had been used to take her out hunting when she was a small child, so that she had an old-time reverence for him. He seemed, in his absence of small-talk and ‘side,’ superior to the rattle-pated

young men about her—here daughter of Fuljambe gave me a sidelong glance—and one day he had done a thing which toppled her into his arms. She was to go to a fancy dress ball one evening as a Chinese lady. But in the morning a cat upset a bottle of ink over her dress and reduced it to ruin. What was to be done? All the elaborate mask of make-up and head-dressing, which she had rehearsed to such perfection, sacrificed for want of a dress to wear it with! Ruding left that scene of desolation possessed by his one great creative impulse. It seemed that he had in London a Chinese lady's dress which he had brought home with him from San Francisco. No trains from Market Harborough could possibly get him up to Town and back in time, so he had promptly commandeered the only neighbouring motor car, driven it up at a rate which must have approached forty miles an hour—a really fabulous speed for those days—got the dress, sent daughter of Fuljambe a wire, motored back at the same furious pace, and appeared before her door with the dress at eight forty-five. Daughter of Fuljambe received him in her dressing-gown, with her hair combed up and her face beautifully painted. Ruding said quietly: 'Here you are; it's the genuine thing,' and disappeared before she had time to thank him. The dress was superior to the one the cat had spoiled. That night she accepted him. 'Miles didn't properly propose to me,' she said; 'I saw he couldn't bear

to, because of what he'd done, so I just had to tell him not to keep his form so awfully. And here we are ! He is a dear, isn't he ?'

In his dealings with her he certainly was, for she was a self-centred little person.

They went off to Vancouver Island in September. The following January I heard that he had joined a Yeomanry contingent and gone out to fight the Boers. He left his wife in England with her people on his way. I met her once or twice before he was invalided home with enteric. She told me that she had opposed his going, till she found out it was making him quite miserable. 'And yet, you know,' she said, 'he's really frightfully devoted.'

When he recovered they went back to Vancouver Island, where he found his ranch so let down that he had to begin nearly all over again. I can imagine what he went through with his dainty and exacting helpmate. She came home in 1904 to get over it, and again I met her out hunting.

'Miles is too good for me,' she said the second day as we were jogging home ; 'he's got such fearful pluck. If only he'd kick his conscience out of the window sometimes. Oh ! Mr. Bartlet, I don't want to go back there—I really don't ; it's simply deadly. But he says if he gives this up he'll be thirty-eight without a thing to show for it, and just have to cadge round for a job, and he won't do that ; but I don't believe I can stand it much longer.'

I wrote to Ruding. His answer was dry and inexpressive, but I could read between the lines : Heaven forbid that he should drag his wife out to him again, but he would have to stick it there another two years ; then, perhaps, he could sell and buy a farm in England. To clear out now would be ruination. He missed his wife awfully, but—one must hoe one's row, and he would rather she stayed with her people than force herself to rough it out there with him.

Then, of course, came that which a man like Ruding, with his loyalty and his sense of form, is the last to imagine possible. Daughter of Fuljambe met a young man in the Buffs or Greens or Blues, and after, I am sure, a struggle—she was not a bad little sort—went off with him. That happened early in 1906, just as he was beginning to see the end of his struggle with Bear Ranch. I felt very sorry for him, yet inclined to say : ‘ My dear man, where was your imagination ; couldn't you see this was bound to happen with “ daughter of Fuljambe ” once she got away from you ? ’ And yet, poor devil, what could he have done ?

He came home six thousand miles to give her a divorce. A ghoulisn curiosity took me into Court. I never had more whole-hearted admiration for Ruding than I had that day, watching him in that pretentiously crooked Court among us tight-lipped, curly-minded lawyers, giving his unemotional evidence. Straight, thin,

lined and brown, with grey already in his peculiar-coloured hair, his voice low, his eyes unwavering, in all his lonely figure a sad, quiet protest—it was not I only who was moved by the little speech he made to the Judge : ‘ My Lord, I should like to say that I have no bitter feelings ; I think it was my fault for asking a woman to share a rough, lonely life, so far away.’ It gave me a queer pleasure to see the little bow the Judge made him, as if saying : ‘ Sir, as one gentleman to another.’ I had meant to get hold of him after the case, but when it came to the point I felt it was the last thing he would want of anyone. He went straight back the six thousand miles and sold his ranch. Cunningham, who used to be in our house, and had a Government post in Esquimaux, told me that Ruding made himself quite unpopular over that sale. Some enterprising gentleman, interested in real estate, had reported the discovery of coal seams, which greatly enhanced the value of Bear Ranch and several neighbouring properties. Ruding was offered a big sum. He took it, and had already left the neighbourhood when the report about coal was duly disproved. Ruding at once offered to cancel the price, and take the agricultural value of the property. His offer was naturally accepted, and the disgust of other owners who had sold on the original report may be imagined. More wedded to the rights of property, they upheld the principle ‘ Caveat emptor,’ and justified themselves by

calling Ruding names. With his diminished proceeds he bought another ranch on the mainland.

How he spent the next eight years I only vaguely know. I don't think he came home at all. Cunningham spoke of him as 'Still the same steady-going old chap, awfully respected; but no one knows him very well. He looks much as he did, except that he's gone grey.'

Then, like a bolt from hell, came the Great War. I can imagine Ruding almost glad. His imagination would not give him the big horror of the thing; he would see it as the inevitable struggle, the long-expected chance to show what he and his country were made of. And I must confess that on the evidence he seems to have been made of even better stuff than his country. He began by dyeing his hair. By dint of this and by slurring the eight of his age so that it sounded like forty odd, he was accepted, and, owing to his Transvaal experience, given a commission in Kitchener's army. But he did not get out to France till early in 1916. He was considered by his Colonel the best officer in the regiment for training recruits, and his hair, of course, had soon gone grey again. They said he chafed terribly at being kept at home. In the spring of 1916 he was mentioned in despatches, and that summer was badly gassed on the Somme. I went to see him in hospital. He had grown a little grey moustache, but otherwise seemed quite un-

changed. I grasped at once that he was one of those whose nerve—no matter what happened to him—would see it through. One had the feeling that this would be so as a matter of course, that he himself had not envisaged any other possibility. He was so completely lost in the winning of the war that his own sensations seemed to pass him by. He had become as much of a soldier as the best of those professionally unimaginative stoical creatures, and quite naturally, as if it were in his blood. He dwelt quietly, without visible emotion, in that universal atmosphere of death. All was in the day's work, so long as the country emerged victorious ; nor did there seem the least doubt in his mind but that it would so emerge. A part of me went with him all the way, but a part of me stared at him in curiosity, surprise, admiration, and a sort of contempt, as at a creature too single-hearted and uncomplicated. One side of me was bred like him—armorial bearings, daughter of Ruding, and all the rest of it—the other had new blood with all its doubts and ferments.

I saw him several times in that hospital at Teignmouth, where he recovered slowly.

One day I asked him point blank whether one's nerve was not bound to go in time. He looked a little surprised and said rather coldly : ' Not if your heart's in the right place.'

That was it to a T. His heart was so deeply rooted in exactly the right place that nothing external could get at it. Whatever downed Ruding

would have to blow him up bodily—there was no detaching his heart from the rest of him. And that's what I mean by an inbred quality, the inner pluck that you can bet on. I don't say it's not to be found in private soldiers and 'new' people, but not in quite the same—shall we say?—matter-of-course way. When those others have it, they're proud of it or conscious of it, or simply primitively virile and thick-skinned; they don't—like such as Ruding—regard not having it as 'impossible,' a sort of disgrace. If scientists could examine the nerves of men like him, would they discern a faint difference in their colour or texture—the result of generations of nourishment above the average and of a traditional philosophy which for hundreds of years has held fear to be *the* cardinal offence? I wonder.

He went out again in 1917, and was out for the rest of the war. He did nothing very startling or brilliant; but, as at school, he was always on the ball, finishing as hard as when he started. At the Armistice he was a Lieutenant-Colonel, and a Major when he was gazetted out, at the age of fifty-three, with the various weaknesses which gas and a prolonged strain leave in a man of that age, but no pensionable disability. He went back to Vancouver. Anyone at all familiar with fruit-growing knows it for a pursuit demanding the most even and constant attention. When Ruding joined up he had perforce left his ranch in the first hands which came along; and at that time,

with almost every rancher in like case, those hands were very poor substitutes for the hands of an owner. He went back to a property practically valueless. He was not in sufficient health to sit down for another long struggle to pull it round, as after the Boer War, so he sold it for a song and came home again, full of confidence that, with his record, he would get a job. He found that his case was that of thousands. They didn't want him back in the Army. They were awfully sorry, but they didn't know what they could do for him. The Governmental education and employment schemes, too, seemed all for younger men. He sat down on the song and the savings from his pay to wait for some ship or other out of his fleet of applications to come home. It did not come; his savings went. How did I know all this? I will tell you.

One night last January I had occasion to take a cab from a restaurant in Soho to my Club in Pall Mall. It was wet, and I got in hastily. I was sitting there comatose from my good dinner when I had a queer feeling that I knew the back of the driver. It had—what shall I call it?—a refined look. The man's hair was grey; and I began trying to recollect the profile I had glimpsed when bolting in. Suddenly with a sort of horror the thought flashed through me: Miles Ruding!

It was!

When I got out and we looked each other in the face, he smiled and my lips quivered. 'Old

chap,' I said, 'draw your cab up on that stand and get in with me.'

When we were sitting together in his cab we lighted cigarettes, and didn't speak for quite a minute, till I burst out :

'Look here ! What does this mean ?'

'Bread and butter.'

'Good God ! And this is what the country——'

'Bartlet,' he said, through curiously set lips, with a little fixed smile about the corners, 'cut out all that about the country. I prefer this to any more cadging for a job ; that's all.'

Silent from shame, I broke out at last : 'It's the limit ! What about the Government schemes ?'

'No go ! they're all for younger men.'

'My dear chap !' was all I could find to say.

'This isn't a bad life in good weather,' he went on with that queer smile ; 'I haven't much of a chest now.'

'Do you mean to say you contemplate going on with this ?'

'Till something turns up ; but I'm no good at asking for things, Bartlet ; I simply can't do it.'

'What about your people ?'

✓ 'Dead or broke.'

'Come and stay with me till your ship comes home.'

He squeezed my arm and shook his head. That's what's so queer about gentility ! If only I could have established a blood tie ! Ruding

would have taken help or support from his kinsfolk—would have inherited without a qualm from a second cousin that he'd never seen ; but from the rest of the world it would be charity. Sitting in that cab of his, he told me, without bitterness, the tale which is that of hundreds since the war. Ruding one could not pity to his face, it would have been impossible. And, when he had finished, I could only mutter :

‘ Well, I think it's damnable, considering what the country owes you.’

He did not answer. You can say what you like about his limitations, but Miles Ruding was bred to keep his form.

I nearly shook his hand off when I left him, and I could see that he disliked that excessive display of feeling. From my Club doorway I looked round. He had resumed his driver's seat, and, through the rain, I saw him with the cigarette between his lips, and the lamplight shining on his lean profile. Very still he sat—symbol of that lost cause, gentility.

1920.

A PORTRAIT

It is at the age of eighty that I picture him, without the vestige of a stoop, rather above middle height, of very well-proportioned figure, whose flatness of back and easy movements were the admiration of all who saw them. His iron-grey eyes had lost none of their colour, they were set-in deep, so that their upper lids were invisible, and had a peculiar questioning directness, apt to change suddenly into twinkles. His head was of fine shape—one did not suspect that it required a specially made hat, being a size larger than almost any other head ; it was framed in very silky silvery hair, brushed in an arch across his forehead, and falling in becoming curves over the tips of his ears ; and he wore always a full white beard and moustaches, which concealed a jaw and chin of great determination cleft by a dimple. His nose had been broken in his early boyhood ; it was the nose of a thinker, broad and of noticeable shape. The colour of his cheeks was a fine dry brown ; his brow very capacious, both wide and high, and endowed with a singular serenity. But it was the balance and poise of his head which commanded so much attention. In a theatre,

church, concert-hall, there was never any head so fine as his, for the silvery hair and beard lent to its massiveness a curious grace and delicacy.

The owner of that head could not but be endowed with force, sagacity, humour, and the sense of justice. It expressed, indeed, his essential quality—equanimity ; for there were two men in him—he of the chin and jaw, a man of action and tenacity, and he of the nose and brow, the man of speculation and impersonality ; yet these two were so curiously balanced and blended that there was no harsh ungraceful conflict. And what made this equanimity so memorable was the fact that both his power of action and his power of speculation were of high quality. He was not a commonplace person content with a little of both. He wanted and had wanted throughout life, if one may judge by records, a good deal of both, ever demanding with one half of him strong and continuous action, and with the other half, high and clean thought and behaviour. The desire for the best both in material and spiritual things remained with him through life. He felt things deeply ; and but for his strange balance, and a yearning for inward peace which never seems to have deserted him, his ship might well have gone down in tragedy.

To those who had watched that journey, his voyage through life seemed favourable, always on the top of the weather. He had worked hard, and he had played hard, but never too hard. And

though one might often see him irritated, I think no one ever saw him bored. He perceived a joke quicker than most of us ; he was never eccentric, yet fundamentally independent of other people's opinions, and perhaps a little unconscious that there were better men than he. Not that he was conceited, for of this quality, so closely allied to stupidity and humbug, he had about as much as the babe unborn. He was, indeed, a natural foe to anæmia in any of its forms, just as he was instinctively hostile to gross bull-beef men and women. The words, 'a bullying chap,' were used by him as crushing dispraise. I can recall him now in his chair after dinner, listening to one who, puffing his cigarette, is letting himself go on a stream of robustious, rather swaggering complacencies ; with what a comprehending straight look he regards the speaker, not scornful, not sarcastic, but simply, as it were, saying : 'No, my young buck, for all your fine full-blooded talk, and all your red face, you are what I see you to be, and you will do what I tell you to do !' Such men had no chance with him when it came to the tug of war ; he laid his will on them as if they had been children.

He was that rather rare thing, a pure-blooded Englishman ; having no strain of Scotch, Welsh, Irish, or foreign blood in his pedigree for four hundred years at least. He sprang from a long line of farmers intermarrying with their kind in the most southern corner of Devonshire, and it is

probable that Norse and British blood were combined in him in a high state of equality. Even in the actual situation of his place of origin, the principle of balance had been maintained, for the old farmhouse from which his grandfather had emerged had been perched close to the cliff. Thus, to the making of him had gone land and sea, the Norseman and the Celt.

Articled to the Law at the age of sixteen by his father, a Plymouth merchant, whose small ancient ships traded to the Mediterranean in fruits, leather, and wines, he had come to London, and at the earliest possible date (as was the habit with men in those times) had been entered on the rolls as a solicitor. Often has he told me of the dinner he gave in honour of that event. 'I was a thread-paper, then,' he would say (indeed, he never became fat)—'We began with a barrel of oysters.' About that and other festivities of his youth there was all the rich and rollicking flavour of the days of *Pickwick*. He was practically dependent on his own exertions from the time he began to practise his profession, and it was characteristic of him that he never seems to have been hard pressed for money. The inherent sanity and moderation of his instincts preserved him, one imagines, from the financial ups and downs of most young men, for there was no niggardliness in him, and a certain breadth of conception characterised his money affairs throughout life. It was rather by the laws of gravity, therefore,

whereby money judiciously employed attracts money, and the fact that he lived in that money-maker's Golden Age, the nineteenth century, that he had long been (at the age of eighty) a wealthy man. Money was to him the symbol of a well-spent, well-ordered life, provocative of warmth in his heart because he loved his children, and was careful of them to a fault. He did not marry till he was forty-five, but his feeling for the future of his family manifested itself with the birth of his first child. Selecting a fair and high locality, not too far away from London, he set himself at once to make a country place, where the little things should have fresh air, new milk, and all the fruits of the earth, home-grown round them. Quite wonderful was the forethought he lavished on that house and little estate stretching down the side of a hill, with its walled gardens, pasture, corn-land and coppice. All was solid, and of the best, from the low four-square red brick house with its concrete terrace and French windows, to the cow-houses down by the coppice. From the oak trees, hundreds of years old, on the lawns, to the peach trees just planted along the south sunny walls. But here, too, there was no display for the sake of it, and no extravagance. Everything was at hand, from home-baked bread, to mushrooms wild and tame ; from the stables with their squat clock-tower, to pigsties ; from roses that won all the local prizes, to bluebells ; but nothing redundant or pretentious.

The place was an endless pleasure to him, who to the last preserved his power of taking interest, not only in great, but in little things. Each small triumph over difficulty—the securing of hot water in such a quarter, the better lighting of another, the rescue of the nectarines from wasps, the quality of his Alderney cows, the encouragement of rooks—afforded him as much simple and sincere satisfaction as every little victory he achieved in his profession, or in the life of the Companies which he directed. But with all his shrewd practical sense, and almost naïve pleasure in material advantage, he combined a very real spiritual life of his own. Nor was there anything ascetic in that inner life. It was mellow as the music of Mozart, his most beloved composer; Art and Nature, both had their part in it. He was, for instance, very fond of opera, but only when it could be called ‘grand’; and it grieved him that opera was no longer what it had been, yet was it secretly a grave satisfaction that he had known those classical glories denied to the present generation. He loved indeed almost all classical music, but (besides Mozart) especially Beethoven, Gluck, and Meyerbeer, whom he insisted (no less than Herbert Spencer) on considering a great composer. Wagner he tried very hard to appreciate and, after visiting Bayreuth, even persuaded himself that he had succeeded, though he never ceased to point out the great difference that existed between this person and Mozart. He loved the Old Masters

of painting, having for favourites amongst the Italians : Rafael, Correggio, Titian, Tintoretto ; and amongst Englishmen Reynolds and Romney. On the other hand, he regarded Hogarth and Rubens as coarse, but Vandyke he very much admired, because of his beautiful painting of hands, the hall-mark, he would maintain, of an artist's quality. I cannot remember his feeling about Rembrandt, but Turner he certainly distrusted as extravagant. Botticelli and the earlier masters he had not as yet quite learned to relish ; and Impressionism, including Whistler, never really made conquest of his taste, though he always resolutely kept his mind open to what was modern—feeling himself young at heart.

Once on a spring day, getting over a stile, I remember him saying :

‘ Eighty ! I can’t believe it. Seems very queer. I don’t feel it. Eighty ! ’ And, pointing to a blackbird that was singing, he added : ‘ That takes the years off you ! ’ His love of Nature was very intimate, simple, and unconscious. I can see him standing by the pond of a summer evening watching the great flocks of starlings that visited those fields ; or, with his head a little to one side, listening rapturously to a skylark. He would contemplate, too, with a sort of serene passion, sunset effects, and every kind of view.

But his greatest joy in life had been his long summer holidays, in Italy or among the Alps, and his memory was a perfect storehouse of peaks,

passes, and arrivals at Italian inns. He had been a great walker, and, as an old man, was still very active. I can remember him on horseback at the age of sixty, though he had never been a sportsman—not being in the way of hunting, having insufficient patience for fishing, and preferring to spend such time as he might have had for shooting, in communing with his beloved mountains. His love for all kinds of beauty, indeed, was strangely potent ; and perhaps the more natural and deep for its innocence of all tradition and formal culture. He got it, I think, from his mother, of whom he always spoke with reverence as ‘ the most beautiful woman in the Three Towns.’ Yes, his love of beauty was a sensuous, warm glow pervading the whole of him, secretly separating him from the majority of his associates. A pretty face, a beautiful figure, a mellow tune, the sight of dancing, a blackbird’s song, the moon behind a poplar tree, starry nights, sweet scents, and the language of Shakespeare—all these moved him deeply, the more perhaps because he had never learned to express his feelings. His attempts at literature indeed were strangely naïve and stilted ; his verse, in the comic vein, rather good ; but all, as it were, like his period, ashamed to express any intimate feeling except in classical language. Yet his literary tastes were catholic ; Milton was his favourite poet, Byron he also admired ; Browning he did not care for ; his favourite novelist was George Eliot, and, curiously enough—in later

life—Turgenev. I well remember when the translated volumes of that author were coming out, how he would ask for another of those yellow books. He did not know why he liked them, with all those ‘crack-jaw’ Russian names ; but assuredly it was because they were written by one who worshipped beauty.

The works of Dickens and Thackeray he read with appreciation, on the whole, finding the first perhaps a little too grotesque, and the second a little too satiric. Scott, Trollope, Marryat, Blackmore, Hardy, and Mark Twain also pleased him ; but Meredith he thought too ‘misty.’

A great theatre-goer all his life, he was very lukewarm towards modern actors, comparing them adversely with those constellations of the past, Edmund and Charles Kean, Charlie Mathews, Farren, Power, ‘little Robson,’ and Helen Faucit. He was, however, a great lover of Kate Vaughan’s dancing ; an illustration of the equanimity of one who had formed his taste on Taglioni.

Irving he would only accept in *Louis XI*, *The Bells*, and, I think, *Charles I*, and for his mannerisms he had a great aversion. There was something of the old grand manner about his theatre habits. He attended with the very best and thinnest lavender kid gloves on his hands, which he would hold up rather high and clap together at the end of an act which pleased him ; even, on memorable occasions, adding the word ‘Bravo.’ He never

went out before the end of a play, however vehemently he might call it 'poor stuff,' which, to be quite honest, he did about nine times out of ten. And he was ever ready to try again, having a sort of touching confidence in an art which had betrayed him so often. His opera hats were notable, usually of such age as to have lost shape, and surely the largest in London. Indeed, his dress was less varied than that of any man I have ever seen ; but always neat and well-cut, for he went habitually to the best shops, and without eccentricity of any kind. He carried a repeating gold watch and thin round gold chain which passed, smooth and sinuous as a little snake, through a small black seal with a bird on it ; and he never abandoned very well made side-spring boots with cork soles, greatly resenting the way other boots dirtied his hands, which were thin and brown with long polished nails, and blue veins outstanding. For reading only, he wore tortoise-shelled eyeglasses, which he would perch low down on the bridge of his nose, so that he could look over them, for his eyes were very long-sighted. He was extremely fastidious in his linen, and all personal matters, yet impatient of being mollycoddled, or in any way over-valeted. Even on the finest days, he carried an umbrella, the ferrule of which, from his habit of stumping it on the pavement, had a worn and harassed look, and was rarely more than half present.

Having been a Conservative Liberal in politics

till well past sixty, it was not until Disraeli's time that he became a Liberal Conservative. This was curious, for he always spoke doubtfully of 'Dizzy,' and even breathed the word 'humbug' in connection with him. Probably he was offended by what he termed 'the extravagance' in Dizzy's rival. For the Duke of Devonshire and Lord Salisbury he had respect without enthusiasm; and conceived for John Bright a great admiration as soon as he was dead. But on the whole the politician who had most attracted him had been Palmerston, because—if memory serves—he had in such admirable degree the faculty of 'astonishing their weak nerves.' For, though never a Jingo, and in later days both cautious and sane in his Imperialism, he had all a Briton's essential deep-rooted distrust of the foreigner. He felt that they were not quite safe, not quite sound, and must from time to time be made to feel this. Born two years after the battle of Waterloo, he had inherited a certain high pride of island birth. And yet in one case, where he was for years in close contact with a foreigner he conceived for him so grave a respect, that it was quite amusing to watch the discomfiture of his traditional distrust. It was often a matter of wonder amongst those who knew him that a man of his ability and judgment had never even sought to make his mark in public affairs. Of the several reasons for this, the chief was, undoubtedly, the extraordinary balance of his temperament. To

of deep or abstract things, it was not safe to reckon without his criticism, which would sometimes make powerfully shrewd deductions out of the sheer logical insight of a nature neither fundamentally concerned with other worlds, nor brought up to the ways of discussion. He was pre-eminently the son of a time between two ages—a past age of old, unquestioning faith in authority; a future age of new faith, already born but not yet grown. Still sheltering in the shade of the old tree which was severed at the roots and toppling, he never, I think, clearly saw—though he may have had glimpses—that men, like children whose mother has departed from their home, were slowly being forced to trust in, and be good to, themselves and to one another, and so to form out of their necessity, desperately, unconsciously, their new great belief in Humanity. Yes, he was the son of *a time between two ages*—the product of an era without real faith—an individualist to the core.

His attitude towards the poor, for instance, was essentially that of man to man. Save that he could not tolerate impostors (one of his favourite words), and saw through them with almost startling rapidity, he was compassionate to any who had fallen on evil fortune, and especially to those who had been in any way connected with him. But in these almonary transactions he was always particularly secretive, as if rather doubting their sagacity, and the wisdom of allowing them

to become known—himself making up and despatching the parcels of old clothes, and rather surreptitiously producing such coins and writing such cheques as were necessary. But ‘the poor,’ in bulk, were always to him the concern of the Poor Law pure and simple, and in no sense of the individual citizen. It was the same with malefactors, he might pity as well as condemn them, but the idea that the society to which he and they belonged was in any way responsible for them, would never have occurred to him. His sense of justice, like that of his period, was fundamentally based on the notion that every man had started with equal, or at all events, with quite sufficient opportunities, and must be judged as if he had. But, indeed, it was not the custom in his day to concern oneself with problems outside one’s own class. Within that class, and in all matters domestic, no man was ever born with a nicer sense of justice. It was never overridden by his affections; very seldom, and that with a certain charming *naïveté*, by his interests. This sense of justice, however, in no way prevented him from being loved; for, in spite of a temper apt to take fire, flare up, and quickly die down again, he was one of the most lovable of men. There was not an ounce of dourness or asperity in his composition. His laughter was of a most infectious kind, singularly spontaneous and delightful, resembling the laughter of a child. The change which a joke wrought in the aspect of his

large, dignified, and rather noble face, was disconcerting. It became wrinkled, or, as it were, crumpled; and such a twinkling overcame his eyes as was frequently only to be extinguished by moisture. 'That's rich!' was his favourite expression to describe what had tickled him; for he had preserved the use of Devonshire expressions, bringing them forth from an intimate pet drawer of memory, and lingering over them with real gusto. He still loved, too, such Devonshire dishes of his boyhood as 'junket' and 'toad in the hole'; and one of his favourite memories was that of the meals snatched at the old coaching inn at Exeter, while they changed the horses of the Plymouth to London coach. Twenty-four hours at ten miles an hour, without ever a break! Glorious drive! Glorious the joints of beef, the cherry brandy! Glorious the old stage coachman, a 'monstrous fat chap' who at that time ruled the road!

In the City, where his office was situate, he was wont, though at all times a very moderate eater, to frequent substantial, old-fashioned hostleries such as Roche's, Pim's, or Birch's in preference to newer and more pretentious places of refreshment. He had a remarkable palate too, and though he drank very little, was, in his prime, considered as fine a judge of wine as any in London. Of tea he was particularly fond, and always consumed the very best Indian, made with extreme care, maintaining that the

Chinese variety was only fit for persons of no taste.

He had little liking for his profession, believing it to be beneath him, and that Heaven had intended him for an advocate; in which he was probably right, for his masterful acumen could not have failed to assure him a foremost position at the Bar. And in him, I think, it is certain that a great Judge was lost to the State. Despite this contempt for what he called the 'pettifogging' character of his occupation, he always inspired profound respect in his clients; and among the shareholders of his Companies, of which he directed several, his integrity and judgment stood so high that he was enabled to pursue successfully a line of policy often too comprehensive and far-seeing for the temper of the times. The reposeful dignity, and courage, of his head and figure when facing an awkward General Meeting could hardly have been exceeded. He sat, as it were, remote from its gusty temper, quietly determining its course.

Truly memorable were his conflicts with the only other man of his calibre on those Boards, and I cannot remember that he was ever beaten. He was at once the quicker tempered and more cautious. And if he had not the other's stoicism and iron nerve, he saw further into the matter in hand, was more unremitting in his effort, equally tenacious of purpose, and more magnetic. In fact, he had a way with him.

But, after all said, it was in his dealings with children that the best and sweetest side of his personality was manifested. With them he became completely tender, inexhaustibly interested in their interests, absurdly patient, and as careful as a mother. No child ever resisted him, or even dreamed of doing so. From the first moment they loved his white hair and beard, his 'feathers' as one little thing called them. They liked the touch of his thin hand, which was never wet or cold; and, holding to it, were always ready to walk with him—wandering with complete unanimity, not knowing quite where or for what reason. How often have I not watched him starting out on that high adventure with his grandson, his face turned gravely down towards a smaller face turned not quite so gravely up; and heard their voices tremendously concerned with all the things they might be going to do together! How often have I not seen them coming back tired as cats, but still concerned about what was next going to happen! And children were always willing to play cricket with him because he bowled to them very slowly, pitching up what he called 'three-quarter' balls, and himself always getting 'out' almost before he went in. For, though he became in his later years a great connoisseur of cricket, spending many days at Lord's or the Oval, choosing out play of the very highest class, and quite impatient of the Eton and Harrow Match, he still performed

in a somewhat rococo fashion, as of a man taught in the late twenties of the last century, and having occasion to revive that knowledge about 1895. He bent his back knee, and played with a perfectly crooked bat, to the end that when he did hit the ball, which was not too often, it invariably climbed the air. There was, too, about his batting, a certain vein of recklessness or bravado, somewhat out of keeping with his general character, so that, as has been said, he was never in too long. And when he got out he would pitch the bat down as if he were annoyed, which would hugely please his grandson, showing of course that he had been trying his very best, as, indeed, he generally had. But his bowling was extremely impressive, being effected with very bent knees, and a general air of first putting the ball to the eye, as if he were playing bowls; in this way he would go on and on giving the boy 'an innings,' and getting much too hot. In fielding he never could remember on the spur of the moment whether it was his knees or his feet that he ought to close; and this, in combination with a habit of bending rather cautiously, because he was liable to lumbago, detracted somewhat from his brilliance; but when the ball was once in his hands, it was most exciting—impossible to tell whether he would throw it at the running batsman, the wicket, or the bowler, according as the game appeared to him at the moment to be double wicket, single wicket, or rounders. He had lived in days when

games were not the be-all and end-all of existence, and had never acquired a proper seriousness in such matters. Those who passed from cricket with him to cricket in the cold wide world found a change for which at first they were unable to account. But even more fascinating to children than his way of playing cricket was his perfect identification with whatever might be the matter in hand. The examination of a shell, the listening to the voice of the sea imprisoned in it, the making of a cocked hat out of *The Times* newspaper, the doing up of little buttons, the feeding of pigeons with crumbs, the holding fast of a tiny leg while walking beside a pony, all these things absorbed him completely, so that no visible trace was left of the man whose judgment on affairs was admirable and profound. Nor, whatever the provocation, could he ever bring himself to point the moral of anything to a child, having that utter toleration of their foibles which only comes from a natural and perfectly unconscious love of being with them. His face, habitually tranquil, wore in their presence a mellow look of almost devil-may-care serenity.

Their sayings, too, he treasured, as though they were pearls. First poems, such as :

‘ I sorr a worm,
It was half-ly dead ;
I took a great spud,
And speared through his head ’

were to him of singular fair promise. Their

diagnoses of character, moreover, especially after visiting a circus, filled him with pure rapture, and he would frequently repeat this one :

‘ Father, is Uncle a clever man ? ’

‘ H’m ! well—yes, certainly. ’

‘ I never seen no specimens. He can’t balance a pole on his nose, for instance. ’

To the declining benison of their prayers, from their ‘ darling father and mother ’ to ‘ all poor people who are in distress, ’ he loved to listen, not so much for the sentiments expressed, as because, in their little night-gowns, they looked so sweet, and were so roundabout in their way of getting to work.

Yes, children were of all living things his chosen friends, and they knew it.

But in his long life he made singularly few fast friendships with grown-up people, and, as far as I know, no enemies. For there was in him, despite his geniality, a very strong vein of fastidiousness, and such essential deep love of domination, that he found, perhaps, few men of his own age and standing to whom he did not feel natively superior. His most real and lifelong friendship was for a certain very big man with a profound hatred of humbug and a streak of ‘ the desperate character ’ in him. They held each other in the highest esteem, or, as they would probably have put it, swore by one another ; the one grumbling at, but reverencing, the other’s high and resolute equanimity ; the other deploring and admiring

the one's deep and generous recklessness. The expressions : 'Just like John, the careful fellow !' 'Just like Sil, reckless beggar !' were always on their lips ; for like all their generation they were sparing of encomium ; and great, indeed, must have been their emotion before they would show their feelings. Dear as they were to each other's hearts, they never talked together of spiritual things, they never spoke in generalities, but gravely smoking their cigars, discussed their acquaintances, investments, wine, their nephews and grandchildren, and the affairs of the State—condemning the advertising fashion in which everything was now done. Once in a way they would tell a story—but they knew each other's stories too well ; once in a way quote a line of Byron, Shakespeare, or Milton ; or whistle to each other, inharmoniously, a bar or two from some song that Grisi, Mario, or Jenny Lind had sung. Once in a way memories of the heyday of their youth, those far-off golden hours, stealing over them, they would sit silent, with their grave steady eyes following the little rings of bluish smoke. . . . Yes, for all their lack of demonstration, they loved each other well.

I seem still to see the subject of this portrait standing at his friend's funeral one bleak November day, the pale autumn sunlight falling on the silver of his uncovered head a little bowed, and on his grave face, for once so sad. I hear the tones of his voice, still full and steady ; and from the soul in

his eyes, looking, as it were, through and through those forms of death to some deep conclusion of his own. I know how big and sane and sweet he was.

His breed is dying now, it has nearly gone. But as I remember him with that great quiet forehead, with his tenderness, and his glance which travelled to the heart of what it rested on, I despair of seeing his like again. For, with him there seems to me to have passed away a principle, a golden rule of life, nay, more, a spirit—the soul of Balance. It has stolen away, as in the early morning the stars steal out of the sky. *He* knew its tranquil secret, and where he is, there must it still be hovering.

1910.

QUALITY

I KNEW him from the days of my extreme youth, because he made my father's boots ; inhabiting with his elder brother two little shops let into one, in a small by-street—now no more, but then most fashionably placed in the West End.

That tenement had a certain quiet distinction ; there was no sign upon its face that he made for any of the Royal Family—merely his own German name of Gessler Brothers ; and in the window a few pairs of boots. I remember that it always troubled me to account for those unvarying boots in the window, for he made only what was ordered, reaching nothing down, and it seemed so inconceivable that what he made could ever have failed to fit. Had he bought them to put there ? That, too, seemed inconceivable. He would never have tolerated in his house leather on which he had not worked himself. Besides, they were too beautiful—the pair of pumps, so inexpressibly slim, the patent leathers with cloth tops, making water come into one's mouth, the tall brown riding-boots with marvellous sooty glow, as if, though new, they had been worn a hundred years. Those pairs could only have been

made by one who saw before him the Soul of Boot—so truly were they prototypes incarnating the very spirit of all footgear. These thoughts, of course, came to me later, though even when I was promoted to him, at the age of perhaps fourteen, some inkling haunted me of the dignity of himself and brother. For to make boots—such boots as he made—seemed to me then, and still seems to me, mysterious and wonderful.

I remember well my shy remark, one day, while stretching out to him my youthful foot :

‘Isn’t it awfully hard to do, Mr. Gessler?’

And his answer, given with a sudden smile from out of the sardonic redness of his beard :
‘Id is an Ardt!’

Himself, he was a little as if made from leather, with his yellow crinkly face, and crinkly reddish hair and beard, and neat folds slanting down his cheeks to the corners of his mouth, and his guttural and one-toned voice ; for leather is a sardonic substance, and stiff and slow of purpose. And that was the character of his face, save that his eyes, which were grey-blue, had in them the simple gravity of one secretly possessed by the Ideal. His elder brother was so very like him—though watery, paler in every way, with a great industry—that sometimes in early days I was not quite sure of him until the interview was over. Then I knew that it was he, if the words, ‘I will ask my brudder,’ had not been spoken ; and that, if they had, it was his elder brother.

When one grew old and wild and ran up bills, one somehow never ran them up with Gessler Brothers. It would not have seemed becoming to go in there and stretch out one's foot to that blue iron-spectacled glance, owing him for more than—say—two pairs, just the comfortable reassurance that one was still his client.

For it was not possible to go to him very often—his boots lasted terribly, having something beyond the temporary—some, as it were, essence of boot stitched into them.

One went in, not as into most shops, in the mood of: 'Please serve me, and let me go!' but restfully, as one enters a church; and, sitting on the single wooden chair, waited—for there was never anybody there. Soon, over the top edge of that sort of well—rather dark, and smelling soothingly of leather—which formed the shop, there would be seen his face, or that of his elder brother, peering down. A guttural sound, and the tip-tap of bast slippers beating the narrow wooden stairs, and he would stand before one without coat, a little bent, in leather apron, with sleeves turned back, blinking—as if awakened from some dream of boots, or like an owl surprised in daylight and annoyed at this interruption.

And I would say: 'How do you do, Mr. Gessler? Could you make me a pair of Russia leather boots?'

Without a word he would leave me, retiring whence he came, or into the other portion of the

shop, and I would continue to rest in the wooden chair, inhaling the incense of his trade. Soon he would come back, holding in his thin, veined hand a piece of gold-brown leather. With eyes fixed on it, he would remark : ' What a beautiful biece ! ' When I, too, had admired it, he would speak again. ' When do you wand dem ? ' And I would answer : ' Oh ! As soon as you conveniently can. ' And he would say : ' To-morrow fordnighd ? ' Or if he were his elder brother : ' I will ask my brudder ! '

Then I would murmur : ' Thank you ! Good-morning, Mr. Gessler. ' ' Good-morning ! ' he would reply, still looking at the leather in his hand. And as I moved to the door, I would hear the tip-tap of his bast slippers restoring him, up the stairs, to his dream of boots. But if it were some new kind of footgear that he had not yet made me, then indeed he would observe ceremony—divesting me of my boot and holding it long in his hand, looking at it with eyes at once critical and loving, as if recalling the glow with which he had created it, and rebuking the way in which one had disorganised this masterpiece. Then, placing my foot on a piece of paper, he would two or three times tickle the outer edges with a pencil and pass his nervous fingers over my toes, feeling himself into the heart of my requirements.

I cannot forget that day on which I had occasion to say to him : ' Mr. Gessler, the last pair of town walking-boots creaked, you know. '

He looked at me for a time without replying, as if expecting me to withdraw or qualify the statement, then said :

‘ Id shouldn’d ’ave greaked.’

‘ It did, I’m afraid.’

‘ You goddem wed before dey found dem-selves ?’

‘ I don’t think so.’

At that he lowered his eyes, as if hunting for memory of those boots, and I felt sorry I had mentioned this grave thing.

‘ Zend dem back !’ he said ; ‘ I will look at dem.’

A feeling of compassion for my creaking boots surged up in me, so well could I imagine the sorrowful long curiosity of regard which he would bend on them.

‘ Zome boods,’ he said slowly, ‘ are bad from birdt. If I can do noding wid dem, I dake dem off your bill.’

Once (once only) I went absent-mindedly into his shop in a pair of boots bought in an emergency at some large firm’s. He took my order without showing me any leather, and I could feel his eyes penetrating the inferior integument of my foot. At last he said :

‘ Dose are nod my boods.’

The tone was not one of anger, nor of sorrow, not even of contempt, but there was in it something quiet that froze the blood. He put his hand down and pressed a finger on the place where the

left boot, endeavouring to be fashionable, was not quite comfortable.

'Id 'urds you dere,' he said. 'Dose big virms 'ave no self-respect. Drash!' And then, as if something had given way within him, he spoke long and bitterly. It was the only time I ever heard him discuss the conditions and hardships of his trade.

'Dey get id all,' he said, 'dey get id by adverdisement, nod by work. Dey dake it away from us, who lose our boods. Id gomes to this—bresently I haf no work. Every year id gets less—you will see.' And looking at his lined face I saw things I had never noticed before, bitter things and bitter struggle—and what a lot of grey hairs there seemed suddenly in his red beard!

As best I could, I explained the circumstances of the purchase of those ill-omened boots. But his face and voice made a so deep impression that during the next few minutes I ordered many pairs. Nemesis fell! They lasted more terribly than ever. And I was not able conscientiously to go to him for nearly two years.

When at last I went I was surprised to find that outside one of the two little windows of his shop another name was painted, also that of a boot-maker—making, of course, for the Royal Family. The old familiar boots, no longer in dignified isolation, were huddled in the single window. Inside, the now contracted well of the one little shop was more scented and darker than ever.

And it was longer than usual, too, before a face peered down, and the tip-tap of the bast slippers began. At last he stood before me, and, gazing through those rusty iron spectacles, said :

‘ Mr. —, isn’d id ? ’

‘ Ah ! Mr. Gessler,’ I stammered, ‘ but your boots are really *too* good, you know ! See, these are quite decent still ! ’ And I stretched out to him my foot. He looked at it.

‘ Yes,’ he said, ‘ People do nod wand good boods, id seems.’

To get away from his reproachful eyes and voice I hastily remarked : ‘ What have you done to your shop ? ’

He answered quietly : ‘ Id was too exbensif. Do you wand some boods ? ’

I ordered three pairs, though I had only wanted two, and quickly left. I had I know not quite what feeling of being part, in his mind, of a conspiracy against him ; or not perhaps so much against him as against his idea of boot. One does not, I suppose, care to feel like that ; for it was again many months before my next visit to his shop, paid, I remember, with the feeling : ‘ Oh ! well, I can’t leave the old boy—so here goes ! Perhaps it’ll be his elder brother ! ’

For his elder brother, I knew, had not character enough to reproach me, even dumbly.

And, to my relief, in the shop there did appear to be his elder brother, handling a piece of leather.

‘ Well, Mr. Gessler,’ I said, ‘ how are you ? ’

He came close, and peered at me.

'I am breddy well,' he said slowly; 'but my elder brudder is dead.'

And I saw that it was indeed himself—but how aged and wan! And never before had I heard him mention his brother. Much shocked, I murmured: 'Oh! I am sorry!'

'Yes,' he answered, 'he was a good man, he made a good boot; but he is dead.' And he touched the top of his head, where the hair had suddenly gone as thin as it had been on that of his poor brother, to indicate, I suppose, the cause of death. 'He could nod ged over losing de oder shop. Do you wand any boots?' And he held up the leather in his hand: 'Id's a beaudiful biece.'

I ordered several pairs. It was very long before they came—but they were better than ever. One simply could not wear them out. And soon after that I went abroad.

It was over a year before I was again in London. And the first shop I went to was my old friend's. I had left a man of sixty, I came back to one of seventy-five, pinched and worn and tremulous, who genuinely, this time, did not at first know me.

'Oh! Mr. Gessler,' I said, sick at heart; 'how splendid your boots are! See, I've been wearing this pair nearly all the time I've been abroad; and they're not halfworn out, are they?'

He looked long at my boots—a pair of Russia

leather, and his face seemed to regain steadiness. Putting his hand on my instep, he said :

‘Do dey vid you here? I ’ad drouble wid dat bair, I remember.’

I assured him that they had fitted beautifully.

‘Do you want any boots?’ he said. ‘I can make dem quickly; id is a slack dime.’

I answered : ‘Please, please ! I want boots all round—every kind !’

‘I will make a vresh model. Your food must be bigger.’ And with utter slowness, he traced round my foot, and felt my toes, only once looking up to say :

‘Did I dell you my brudder was dead?’

To watch him was painful, so feeble had he grown; I was glad to get away.

I had given those boots up, when one evening they came. Opening the parcel, I set the four pairs out in a row. Then one by one I tried them on. There was no doubt about it. In shape and fit, in finish and quality of leather, they were the best he had ever made me. And in the mouth of one of the town walking-boots I found his bill. The amount was the same as usual, but it gave me quite a shock. He had never before sent it in till quarter day. I flew downstairs and wrote a cheque, and posted it at once with my own hand.

A week later, passing the little street, I thought I would go in and tell him how splendidly the new boots fitted. But when I came to where his shop had been, his name was gone. Still there, in the

window, were the slim pumps, the patent leathers with cloth tops, the sooty riding-boots.

I went in, very much disturbed. In the two little shops—again made into one—was a young man with an English face.

‘Mr. Gessler in?’ I said.

He gave me a strange, ingratiating look.

‘No, sir,’ he said, ‘no. But we can attend to anything with pleasure. We’ve taken the shop over. You’ve seen our name, no doubt, next door. We make for some very good people.’

‘Yes, yes,’ I said; ‘but Mr. Gessler?’

‘Oh!’ he answered; ‘dead.’

‘Dead! But I only received these boots from him last Wednesday week.’

‘Ah!’ he said; ‘a shockin’ go. Poor old man starved ’imself.’

‘Good God!’

‘Slow starvation, the doctor called it! You see he went to work in such a way! Would keep the shop on; wouldn’t have a soul touch his boots except himself. When he got an order, it took him such a time. People won’t wait. He lost everybody. And there he’d sit, goin’ on and on—I will say that for him—not a man in London made a better boot! But look at the competition! He never advertised! Would ’ave the best leather, too, and do it all ’imself. Well, there it is. What could you expect with his ideas?’

‘But starvation——!’

‘That may be a bit flowery, as the sayin’ is— but I know myself he was sittin’ over his boots day and night, to the very last. You see I used to watch him. Never gave ’imself time to eat ; never had a penny in the house. All went in rent and leather. How he lived so long I don’t know. He regular let his fire go out. He was a character. But he made good boots.’

‘Yes,’ I said, ‘he made good boots.’

1911.

THE BLACK GODMOTHER

SITTING out on the lawn at tea with our friend and his retriever, we had been discussing those massacres of the helpless which had of late occurred, and wondering that they should have been committed by the soldiery of so civilised a State, when, in a momentary pause of our astonishment, our friend, who had been listening in silence, crumpling the drooping soft ear of his dog, looked up and said, 'The cause of atrocities is generally the violence of Fear. Panic's at the back of most crimes and follies.'

Knowing that his philosophical statements were always the result of concrete instance, and that he would not tell us what that instance was if we asked him—such being his nature—we were careful not to agree.

He gave us a look out of those eyes of his, so like the eyes of a mild eagle, and said abruptly: 'What do you say to this, then? . . . I was out in the dog-days last year with this fellow of mine, looking for Osmunda, and stayed some days in a village—never mind the name. Coming back one evening from my tramp, I saw some boys

stoning a mealy-coloured dog. I went up and told the young devils to stop it. They only looked at me in the injured way boys do, and one of them called out, "It's mad, guv'nor!" I told them to clear off, and they took to their heels. The dog followed me. It was a young, leggy, mild-looking mongrel, cross—I should say—between a brown retriever and an Irish terrier. There was froth about its lips, and its eyes were watery; it looked indeed as if it might be in distemper. I was afraid of infection for this fellow of mine, and whenever it came too close shooed it away, till at last it slunk off altogether. Well, about nine o'clock, when I was settling down to write by the open window of my sitting-room—still daylight, and very quiet and warm—there began that most maddening sound, the barking of an unhappy dog. I could do nothing with that continual "Yap—yap!" going on, and it was too hot to shut the window; so I went out to see if I could stop it. The men were all at the pub, and the women just finished with their gossip; there was no sound at all but the continual barking of this dog, somewhere away out in the fields. I travelled by car across three meadows, till I came on a hay-stack by a pool of water. There was the dog sure enough—the same mealy-coloured mongrel, tied to a stake, yapping, and making frantic little runs on a bit of rusty chain; whirling round and round the stake, then standing quite still, and shivering.

I went up and spoke to it, but it backed into the hay-stack, and there it stayed shrinking away from me, with its tongue hanging out. It had been heavily struck by something on the head ; the cheek was cut, one eye half-closed, and an ear badly swollen. I tried to get hold of it, but the poor thing was beside itself with fear. It snapped and flew round so that I had to give it up and sit down with this fellow here beside me to try and quiet it—a strange dog, you know, will generally form his estimate of you from the way it sees you treat another dog. I had to sit there quite half an hour before it would let me go up to it, pull the stake out, and lead it away. The poor beast, though it was so feeble from the blows it had received, was still half-frantic, and I didn't dare to touch it ; and all the time I took good care that this fellow here didn't come too near. Then came the question what was to be done. There was no vet, of course, and I'd no place to put it except my sitting-room, which didn't belong to me. But, looking at its battered head, and its half-mad eyes, I thought : "No trusting you with these bumpkins ; you'll have to come in here for the night !" Well, I got it in, and heaped two or three of those hairy little red rugs land-ladies are so fond of, up in a corner, and got it on to them, and put down my bread and milk. But it wouldn't eat—its sense of proportion was all gone, fairly destroyed by terror. It lay there moaning, and every now and then it raised its

head with a "yap" of sheer fright, dreadful to hear, and bit the air, as if its enemies were on it again ; and this fellow of mine lay in the opposite corner, with his head on his paw, watching it. I sat up for a long time with that poor beast, sick enough, and wondering how it had come to be stoned and kicked and battered into this state ; and next day I made it my business to find out.' Our friend paused, scanned us a little angrily, and then went on : ' It had made its first appearance, it seems, following a bicyclist. There are men, you know—save the mark—who, when their beasts get ill or too expensive, jump on their bicycles and take them for a quick run, taking care never to look behind them. When they get back home they say : " Hullo ! Where's Fido ? " Fido is nowhere, and there's an end ! Well, this poor puppy gave up just as it got to our village ; and, roaming about in search of water, attached itself to a farm labourer. The man—with excellent intentions, as he told me himself—tried to take hold of it, but too abruptly, so that it was startled, and snapped at him. Whereon he kicked it for a dangerous cur, and it went drifting back towards the village, and fell in with the boys coming home from school. It thought, no doubt, that they were going to kick it too, and nipped one of them who took it by the collar. Thereupon they hullabalooed and stoned it down the road to where I found them. Then I put in my little bit of torture, and drove it away, through fear

of infection to my own dog. After that it seems to have fallen in with a man who told me : " Well, you see, he came sneakin' round my house, with the children playin', and snapped at them when they went to stroke him, so that they came running in to their mother, an' she called to me in a fine takin' about a mad dog. I ran out with a shovel and gave 'im one, and drove him out. I'm sorry if he wasn't mad ; he looked it right enough. You can't be too careful with strange dogs." Its next acquaintance was an old stone-breaker, a very decent sort. " Well ! you see," the old man explained to me, " the dog came smellin' round my stones, an' it wouldn't come near, an' it wouldn't go away ; it was all froth and blood about the jaw, and its eyes glared green at me. I thought to meself, bein' the dog-days—I don't like the look o' you, you look funny ! So I took a stone, an' got it here, just on the ear ; an' it fell over. And I thought to meself : Well, you've got to finish it, or it'll go bitin' somebody, for sure ! But when I come to it with my hammer, the dog it got up—an' you know how it is when there's somethin' you've 'alf killed, and you feel sorry, and yet you feel you must finish it, an' you hit at it blind, you hit at it agen an' agen. The poor thing, it wriggled and snapped, an' I was terrified it'd bite me, an' some'ow it got away." ' Again our friend paused, and this time we dared not look at him.

' The next hospitality it was shown,' he went

on presently, ' was by a farmer, who, seeing it all bloody, drove it off, thinking it had been digging up a lamb that he'd just buried. The poor homeless beast came sneaking back, so he told his men to get rid of it. Well, they got hold of it somehow—there was a hole in its neck that looked as if they'd used a pitchfork—and, mortally afraid of its biting them, but not liking, as they told me, to drown it, for fear the owner might come on them, they got a stake and a chain, and fastened it up, and left it in the water by the haystack where I found it. I had some conversation with that farmer. "That's right," he said, "but who was to know? I couldn't have my sheep worried. The brute had blood on his muzzle. These curs do a lot of harm when they've once been blooded. You can't run risks." ' Our friend cut viciously at a dandelion with his stick. 'Run risks!' he broke out suddenly. 'That was it—from beginning to end of that poor beast's sufferings, fear! From that fellow on the bicycle, afraid of the worry and expense, as soon as it showed signs of distemper, to myself and the man with the pitchfork—not one of us, I daresay, would have gone out of our way to do it a harm. But we felt fear, and so—by the law of self-preservation, or whatever you like—it all began, till there the poor thing was, with a battered head and a hole in its neck, ravenous with hunger, and too distraught even to lap my bread and milk. Yes, and there's something uncanny about a

suffering animal—we sat watching it, and again we were afraid, looking at its eyes and the way it bit the air. Fear! It's the black godmother of all damnable things!'

Our friend bent down, crumpling and crumpling at his dog's ears. We, too, gazed at the ground, thinking of that poor lost puppy, and the horrible inevitability of all that happens, seeing men are what they are; thinking of all the foul doings in the world, whose black godmother is Fear.

'And what became of the poor dog?' one of us asked at last.

'When,' said our friend slowly, 'I'd had my fill of watching, I covered it with a rug, took this fellow away with me, and went to bed. There was nothing else to do. At dawn I was awakened by three dreadful cries—not like a dog's at all. I hurried down. There was the poor beast—wriggled out from under the rug—stretched on its side, dead. This fellow of mine had followed me in, and he went and sat down by the body. When I spoke to him he just looked round, and wagged his tail along the ground, but would not come away; and there he sat till it was buried, very interested but not sorry at all.'

Our friend was silent, looking angrily at something in the distance.

And we, too, were silent, seeing in spirit that vigil of early morning: The thin, lifeless, sandy-

coloured body, stretched on those red mats ; and this black creature—now lying at our feet—propped on its haunches like the dog in ‘The Death of Procris,’ patient, curious, ungrieved, staring down at it with his bright, interested eyes.

1912.

PEACE MEETING

COLIN WILDERTON, coming from the west on his way to the Peace Meeting, fell in with John Rudstock, coming from the north, and they walked on together. After they had commented on the news from Russia and the inflation of money, Rudstock said abruptly :

‘ We shall have a queer meeting, I expect.’

‘ God knows !’ answered Wilderton.

And both smiled, conscious that they were uneasy, but predetermined not to show it under any circumstances. Their smiles were different, for Rudstock was a black-browed man with dark beard and strong, thick figure, and Wilderton a very light-built, grey-haired man, with kindly eyes and no health. He had supported the war an immense time, and had only recently changed his attitude. In common with all men of warm feelings, he had at first been profoundly moved by the violation of Belgium. The horrors of the German advance through that little country and through France, to which he was temperamentally attached, had stirred in him a vigorous detestation, freely expressed in many ways. Extermination, he had felt all those early months,

was hardly good enough for brutes who could commit such crimes against humanity and justice ; and his sense of the need for signal defeat of a noxious force riding rough-shod over the hard-won decency of human life had survived well into the third year of the war. He hardly knew himself when his feeling had begun—not precisely to change, but to run, as it were, in a different channel. A man of generous instincts, artistic tastes and unsteady nerves too thinly coated with that God-given assurance which alone fits a man for knowing what is good for the world, he had become gradually haunted by the thought that he was not laying down his own life, but only the lives of his own and other people's sons. And the consideration that he was laying them down for the benefit of their own future had lost its grip on him. At moments he was still able to see that the war he had so long supported had not yet attained sufficient defeat of the Prussian military machine to guarantee that future ; but his pity and distress for all these young lives cut down without a chance to flower had grown till he had become, as it were, a gambler. What good—he would think—to secure the future of the young in a Europe which would soon have no young ? Every country was suffering hideously—the criminal country not least, thank God ! Suppose the war were to go on for another year, two, three years, and then stop from sheer exhaustion of both sides, while all the time these

boys were being killed and maimed, for nothing more, perhaps, than could be obtained to-day. What then? True the Government promised victory, but they never promised it within a year. Governments did not die; what if they were to go on promising it a year hence, till everybody else was dead! Did history ever show that victory in the present could guarantee the future? Besides, even if not so openly defeated as was desirable, this damnable Prussianism had got such a knock that it could never again do what it had in the past. These last, however, were but side reflections, toning down for him the fact that his nerves could no longer stand this vicarious butchery of youth. And so he had gradually become that 'traitor to his country, a weak-kneed, peace-by-negotiation man.' Physically his knees really were weak, and he used to smile a wry smile when he read the expression.

John Rudstock, of vigorous physique, had opposed the war, on principle, from the start, not because, any more than Wilderton, he approved of Prussianism, but because, as an essentially combative personality, he opposed everything supported by a majority; the greater the majority, the more bitterly he opposed it; and no one would have been more astonished than he at hearing that this was his principle. He preferred to put it that he did not believe in opposing force by force. In peace-time he was a 'stalwart,' in war-time a 'renegade.'

The street leading to the chapel which had been engaged seemed quiet enough. Designed to make an impression on public opinion, every care had been taken that the meeting should not attract the public eye. God's protection had been enlisted, but two policemen also stood at the entrance, and half a dozen others were suspiciously near by. A thin trickle of persons, mostly women, were passing through the door. Colin Wilderton, making his way up the aisle to the platform, wrinkled his nose, thinking: 'Stuffy in here.' It had always been his misfortune to love his neighbours individually, but to dislike them in a bunch. On the platform some fifteen men and women were already gathered. He seated himself modestly in the back row, while John Rudstock, less retiring, took his place at the chairman's right hand. The speakers began with a precipitancy hardly usual at a public meeting. Wilderton listened, and thought: 'Dreadfully *cliché*; why can't someone say straight out that boys enough have been killed?' He had become conscious, too, of a muttering noise, as of the tide coming in on a heavy wind; it broke suddenly into component parts—human voices clamouring outside. He heard blows raining on the door, saw sticks smashing in the windows. The audience had risen to its feet, some rushing to defend the doors, others standing irresolute. John Rudstock was holding up the chair he had been sitting on. Wilderton had just

time to think : ' I thought so,' when a knot of young men in khaki burst into the chapel, followed by a crowd. He knew he was not much good in a scrimmage, but he placed himself at once in front of the nearest woman. At that moment, however, some soldiers, pouring through a side-door, invaded the platform from behind, and threw him down the steps. He arrived at the bottom with a bump, and was unable to get up because of the crowd around him. Someone fell over him ; it was Rudstock, swearing horribly. He still had the chair in his hand, for it hit Wilderton a nasty blow. The latter saw his friend recover his feet and swing the weapon, and with each swing down went some friend or foe, until he had cleared quite a space round him. Wilderton, still weak and dizzy from his fall, sat watching this Homeric battle. Chairs, books, stools, sticks were flying at Rudstock, who parried them, or diverted their course so that they carried on and hit Wilderton, or crashed against the platform. He heard Rudstock roar like a lion and saw him advance, swinging his chair ; down went two young men in khaki, down went a third in mufti ; a very tall young soldier, also armed with a chair, dashed forward, and the two fought in single combat. Wilderton had got on his feet by now, and, adjusting his eyeglass, for he could see little without, he caught up a hymn-book, and, flinging it at the crowd with all his force, shouted : ' Hoobloodyray ! ' and followed with his fists

clenched. One of them encountered what must have been the jaw of an Australian, it was so hard against his hand ; he received a vicious punch in the ribs and was again seated on the ground. He could still hear his friend roaring, and the crash of chairs meeting in mid-air. Something fell heavily on him. It was Rudstock—he was insensible. There was a momentary lull, and peering up as best he could from underneath the body, Wilderton saw that the platform had been cleared of all its original inhabitants, and was occupied mainly by youths in navy blue and khaki. A voice called out :

‘ Order ! Silence ! ’

Rubbing Rudstock’s temples with brandy from a flask which he had had the foresight to slip into his pocket, he listened as best he could, with the feet of the crowd jostling his anatomy.

‘ Here we are, boys,’ the voice was saying, ‘ and here we’ll always be when these treacherous blighters try their games on. No peace, no peace at any price ! We’ve got to show them that we won’t have it. Leave the women alone—though they ought to be ashamed of themselves ; but for the men—the skunks—shooting’s too good for them. Let them keep off the course or we’ll make them. We’ve broken up this meeting, and we’ll break up every meeting that tries to talk of peace. Three cheers for the old flag ! ’

During the cheers which followed Wilderton

was discovering signs of returning consciousness in his friend ; for Rudstock had begun to breathe heavily. Pouring some brandy into his mouth, he propped him up as best he could against a wooden structure, which he suddenly perceived to be the chapel's modest pulpit. A thought came to his dazed brain. If he could get up into that, as if he had dropped from Heaven, they might almost listen to him. He disengaged his legs from under Rudstock and began crawling up the steps on hands and knees. Once in the pulpit he sat on the floor below the level of visibility, getting his breath and listening to the cheers. Then, smoothing his hair, he rose, and waited for the cheers to stop. He had calculated rightly. His sudden appearance, his grey hair, eyeglass and smile deceived them for a moment. There was a hush.

'Boys !' he said, 'listen to me a second. I want to ask you something. What on earth do you think we came here for ? Simply and solely because we can't bear to go on seeing you killed day after day, month after month, year after year. That's all, and it's Christ's truth. Amen !'

A strange gasp and mutter greeted this little speech ; then a dull voice called out :

'Pro-German !'

Wilderton flung up his hand.

'The Germans to hell !' he said simply.

The dull voice repeated :

'Pro-German !' And the speaker on the

platform called out : ' Come out of that ! When we want you to beg us off we'll let you know.'

Wilderton spun round to him.

' You're all wonderful !' he began, but a hymn-book hit him fearfully on the forehead, and he sank down into the bottom of the pulpit. This last blow, coming on the top of so many others, had deprived him of intelligent consciousness ; he was but vaguely aware of more speeches, cheers and tramlings, then of a long hush, and presently found himself walking out of the chapel door between Rudstock and a policeman. It was not the door by which they had entered, and led to an empty courtyard.

' Can you walk ?' said the policeman.

Wilderton nodded.

' Then walk off !' said the policeman, and withdrew again into the house of God.

The two walked, holding each other's arms, a little unsteadily at first. Rudstock had a black eye and a cut on his ear, the blood from which had stained his collar and matted his beard. Wilderton's coat was torn, his forehead bruised, his cheek swollen, and he had a pain in his back which prevented him from walking very upright. They did not speak, but in an archway did what they could, with pins and handkerchiefs and by turning up Rudstock's coat collar, to regain something of respectability. When they were once more under way Rudstock said coldly :

' I heard you. You should have spoken for

yourself. I came, as you know, because I don't believe in opposing force by force. At the next peace meeting we hold I shall make that plainer.'

Wilderton murmured :

'Yes, yes ; I saw you—I'm sure you will. I apologise ; I was carried away.'

Rudstock went on in a deep voice :

'As for those young devils, they may die to a man if they like ! Take my advice and let them alone.'

Wilderton smiled on the side which was not swollen.

'Yes,' he said sadly, 'it does seem difficult to persuade them to go on living. Ah, well !'

'Ah, well !' he said again, five minutes later, 'they're wonderful—poor young beggars ! I'm very unhappy, Rudstock !'

'I'm not,' said Rudstock, 'I've enjoyed it in a way ! Good-night !'

They shook hands, screwing up their mouths with pain, for their fists were badly bruised, and parted, Rudstock going to the north, Wilderton to the west.

THE BROKEN BOOT

THE actor, Gilbert Caister, who had been 'out' for six months, emerged from his East-coast seaside lodging about noon in the day, after the opening of *Shooting the Rapids*, on tour, in which he was playing Dr. Dominick in the last act. A salary of four pounds a week would not, he was conscious, remake his fortunes, but a certain jauntiness had returned to the gait and manner of one employed again at last.

Fixing his monocle, he stopped before a fishmonger's and, with a faint smile on his face, regarded a lobster. Ages since he had eaten a lobster! One could long for a lobster without paying, but the pleasure was not solid enough to detain him. He moved upstreet and stopped again, before a tailor's window. Together with the actual tweeds, in which he could so easily fancy himself refitted, he could see a reflection of himself, in the faded brown suit wangled out of the production of *Marmaduke Mandeville* the year before the war. The sunlight in this damned town was very strong, very hard on seams and button-holes, on knees and elbows! Yet he received the

ghost of æsthetic pleasure from the reflected elegance of a man long fed only twice a day, of an eyeglass well rimmed out from a soft brown eye, of a velour hat salved from the production of *Educating Simon* in 1912; and in front of the window he removed that hat, for under it was his new phenomenon, not yet quite evaluated, his *mèche blanche*. Was it an asset, or the beginning of the end? It reclined backwards on the right side, conspicuous in his dark hair, above that shadowy face always interesting to Gilbert Caister. They said it came from atrophy of the—something nerve, an effect of the war, or of undernourished tissue. Rather distinguished, perhaps, but——!

He walked on, and became conscious that he had passed a face he knew. Turning, he saw it also turned on a short and dapper figure—a face rosy, bright, round, with an air of cherubic knowledge, as of a getter-up of amateur theatricals.

Bryce-Green, by George!

‘Caister? It is! Haven’t seen you since you left the old camp. Remember what sport we had over *Gotta-Grampus*? By Jove! I am glad to see you. Doing anything with yourself? Come and have lunch with me.’

Bryce-Green, the wealthy patron, the moving spirit of entertainment in that south-coast convalescent camp. And, drawling slightly, Caister answered:

‘I shall be delighted.’ But within him some-

thing did not drawl : ' By God, you're going to have a feed, my boy ! '

And—elegantly threadbare, roundabout and dapper—the two walked side by side.

' Know this place ? Let's go in here ! Phyllis, cocktails for my friend Mr. Caister and myself, and caviare on biscuits. Mr. Caister is playing here ; you must go and see him.'

The girl who served the cocktails and the caviare looked up at Caister with interested blue eyes. ' Precious !—he had been ' out ' for six months !

' Nothing of a part,' he drawled ; ' took it to fill a gap.' And below his waistcoat the gap echoed : ' Yes, and it'll take some filling.'

' Bring your cocktail along, Caister ; we'll go into the little further room, there'll be nobody there. What shall we have—a lobstah ? '

And Caister murmured : ' I love lobstahs.'

' Very fine and large here. And how are you, Caister ? So awfully glad to see you—only real actor we had.'

' Thanks,' said Caister, ' I'm all right.' And he thought : ' He's a damned amateur, but a nice little man.'

' Sit here. Waiter, bring us a good big lobstah and a salad ; and then—er—a small fillet of beef with potatoes fried crisp, and a bottle of my special hock. Ah ! and a rum omelette—plenty of rum and sugah. Twig ? '

And Caister thought : ' Thank God, I do.'

They had sat down opposite each other at one of two small tables in the little recessed room.

'Luck!' said Bryce-Green.

'Luck!' replied Caister; and the cocktail trickling down him echoed: 'Luck!'

'And what do you think of the state of the drama?'

Oh! ho! A question after his own heart. Balancing his monocle by a sweetish smile on the opposite side of his mouth, Caister drawled his answer: 'Quite too bally awful!'

'H'm! Yes,' said Bryce-Green; 'nobody with any genius, is there?'

And Caister thought: 'Nobody with any money.'

'Have you been playing anything great? You were so awfully good in *Gotta-Grampus*!'

'Nothing particular. I've been—er—rather slack.' And with their feel around his waist his trousers seemed to echo: 'Slack!'

'Ah!' said Bryce-Green. 'Here we are! Do you like claws?'

'Tha-a-nks. Anything!' To eat—until warned by the pressure of his waist against his trousers! What a feast! And what a flow of his own tongue suddenly released—on drama, music, art; mellow and critical, stimulated by the round eyes and interjections of his little provincial host.

'By Jove, Caister! You've got a *mêche blanche*. Never noticed. I'm awfully interested in *mêches*

blanches. Don't think me too frightfully rude—but did it come suddenly ? ’

‘ No, gradually. ’

‘ And how do you account for it ? ’

‘ Try starvation, ’ trembled on Caister’s lips.

‘ I don’t, ’ he said.

‘ I think it’s ripping. Have some more omelette ? I often wish I’d gone on the regular stage myself. Must be a topping life, if one has talent, like you. ’

Topping ?

‘ Have a cigar. Waiter ! Coffee, and cigars. I shall come and see you to-night. Suppose you’ll be here a week ? ’

Topping ! The laughter and applause—‘ Mr. Caister’s rendering left nothing to be desired ; its —— and its —— are in the true spirit of —— ! ’

Silence recalled him from his rings of smoke. Bryce-Green was sitting, with cigar held out and mouth a little open, and bright eyes round as pebbles, fixed—fixed on some object near the floor, past the corner of the tablecloth. Had he burnt his mouth ? The eyelids fluttered ; he looked at Caister, licked his lips like a dog, nervously, and said :

‘ I say, old chap, don’t think me a beast, but are you at all—er—er—rocky ? I mean—if I can be of any service, don’t hesitate ! Old acquaintance, don’t you know, and all that—— ’

His eyes rolled out again towards the object, and Caister followed them. Out there above the

carpet he saw it—his own boot. It dangled slightly, six inches off the ground—split—right across, twice, between lace and toecap. Quite! He knew it. A boot left him from the rôle of Bertie Carstairs, in *The Dupe*, just before the war. Good boots. His only pair, except the boots of Dr. Dominick, which he was nursing. And from the boot he looked back at Bryce-Green, sleek and concerned. A drop, black when it left his heart, suffused his eye behind the monocle; his smile curled bitterly; he said:

‘Not at all, thanks! Why?’

‘Oh! n-n-nothing. It just occurred to me.’ His eyes—but Caister had withdrawn the boot. Bryce-Green paid the bill and rose.

‘Old chap, if you’ll excuse me; engagement at half-past two. So awf’ly glad to have seen you. Good-bye!’

‘Good-bye!’ said Caister. ‘Thanks.’

He was alone. And, chin on hand, he stared through his monocle into an empty coffee cup. Alone with his heart, his boot, his life to come. . . .

‘And what have you been in lately, Mr. Caister?’

‘Nothing very much lately. Of course, I’ve played almost everything.’ ‘Quite so. Perhaps you’ll leave your address; can’t say anything definite, I’m afraid.’ ‘I—I should—er—be willing to rehearse on approval; or—if I could read the part?’

‘Thank you, afraid we haven’t got as far as that.’

‘No? Quite! Well, I shall hear from you, perhaps.’ And Caister could see his own eyes

looking at the manager. God ! What a look ! . . . A topping life ! A dog's life ! Cadging—cadging—cadging for work ! A life of draughty waiting, of concealed beggary, of terrible depressions, of want of food !

The waiter came skating round as if he desired to clear. Must go ! Two young women had come in and were sitting at the other table between him and the door. He saw them look at him, and his sharpened senses caught the whisper :

‘Sure—in the last act. Don't you see his *mèche blanche* ?’

‘Oh ! yes—of course ! Isn't it—wasn't he—— !’

Gaister straightened his back ; his smile crept out, he fixed his monocle. They had spotted his Dr. Dominick !

‘If you've quite finished, sir, may I clear ?’

‘Certainly. I'm going.’ He gathered himself and rose. The young women were gazing up. Elegant, with faint smile, he passed them close, so that they could not see, managing—his broken boot.

ACME

IN these days no man of genius need starve. The following story of my friend Bruce may be taken as proof of this assertion. Nearly sixty when I first knew him, he must have written already some fifteen books, which had earned him the reputation of 'a genius' with the few who know. He used to live in York Street, Adelphi, where he had two rooms up the very shaky staircase of a house chiefly remarkable for the fact that its front door seemed always open. I suppose there never was a writer more indifferent to what people thought of him. He profoundly neglected the Press—not with one of those neglects which grow on writers from reading reviews of their own works—he seemed never to read criticism, but with the basic neglect of 'an original,' a nomadic spirit, a stranger in modern civilisation, who would leave his attics for long months of wandering, and come back there to hibernate and write a book. He was a tall, thin man, with a face rather like Mark Twain's, black eyebrows which bristled and shot up, a bitten drooping grey moustache, and fuzzy grey hair ; but his eyes were like owl's eyes, piercing, melancholy, dark brown, and gave to

his rugged face an extraordinary expression of a spirit remote from the flesh which had captured it. He was a bachelor, who seemed to avoid women ; perhaps they had 'learned' him that ; for he must have been very attractive to them.

The year of which I write had been to my friend Bruce the devil, monetarily speaking. With his passion for writing that for which his Age had no taste—what could he expect ? His last book had been a complete frost. He had undergone, too, an operation which had cost him much money and left him very weak. When I went to see him that October, I found him stretched out on two chairs, smoking the Brazilian cigarettes which he affected—and which always affected me, so black and strong they were, in their yellow maize-leaf coverings. He had a writing-pad on his knee, and sheets of paper scattered all around. The room had a very meagre look. I had not seen him for a year and more, but he looked up at me as if I'd been in yesterday.

'Hallo !' he said ; 'I went into a thing they call a cinema last night. Have you ever been ?'

'Ever been ? Do you know how long the cinema has been going ? Since about 1900.'

'Well ! What a *thing* ! I'm writing a skit on it !'

'How—a skit ?'

'Parody—wildest yarn you ever read.'

He took up a sheet of paper and began chuckling to himself.

'My heroine,' he said, 'is an Octoroon. Her eyes swim, and her lovely bosom heaves. Everybody wants her, and she's more virtuous than words can say. The situations she doesn't succumb to would freeze your blood; they'd roast your marrow. She has a perfect devil of a brother, with whom she was brought up, and who knows her deep dark secret and wants to trade her off to a millionaire who also has a deep dark secret. Altogether there are four deep dark secrets in my yarn. It's a corker.'

'What a waste of your time!' I said.

'My time!' he answered fiercely. 'What's the use of my time? Nobody buys my books.'

'Who's attending you?'

'Doctors! They take your money, that's all. I've got no money. Don't talk about me!' Again he took up a sheet of manuscript and chuckled.

'Last night—at that place—they had—good God!—a race between a train and a motor-car. Well, I've got one between a train, a motor-car, a flying machine, and a horse.'

I sat up.

'May I have a look at your skit,' I said, 'when you've finished it?'

'It is finished. Wrote it straight off. D'you think I could stop and then go on again with a thing like that?' He gathered the sheets and held them out to me. 'Take the thing—it's amused me to do it. The heroine's secret is that she isn't

an Octoroon at all ; she's a De La Casse—purest Creole blood of the South ; and her villainous brother isn't her brother ; and the bad millionaire isn't a millionaire ; and her penniless lover is. It's rich, I tell you !'

'Thanks,' I said drily, and took the sheets.

I went away concerned about my friend, his illness, and his poverty, especially his poverty, for I saw no end to it.

After dinner that evening I began languidly to read his skit. I had not read two pages of the thirty-five before I started up, sat down again, and feverishly read on. Skit ! By George ! He had written a perfect scenario—or, rather, that which wanted the merest professional touching-up to be perfect. I was excited. It was a little gold-mine if properly handled. Any good film company, I felt convinced, would catch at it. Yes ! But how to handle it ? Bruce was such an unaccountable creature, such a wild old bird ! Imagine his having only just realised the cinema ! If I told him his skit was a serious film, he would say : 'Good God !' and put it in the fire, priceless though it was. And yet, how could I market it without *carte blanche*, and how get *carte blanche* without giving my discovery away ? I was deathly keen on getting some money for him ; and this thing, properly worked, might almost make him independent. I felt as if I had a priceless museum piece which a single stumble might shatter to fragments. The tone of his voice when he spoke

of the cinema—‘What a *thing*!’ kept coming back to me. He was prickly proud, too—very difficult about money. Could I work it without telling him anything? I knew he never looked at a newspaper. But should I be justified in taking advantage of that—in getting the thing accepted and produced without his knowing? I revolved the question for hours, and went to see him again next day.

He was reading.

‘Hallo! You again? What do you think of this theory—that the Egyptians derive from a Saharan civilisation?’

‘I don’t think,’ I said.

‘It’s nonsense. This fellow——’

I interrupted him.

‘Do you want that skit back, or can I keep it?’

‘Skit? What skit?’

‘The thing you gave me yesterday.’

‘That! Light your fire with it. This fellow——’

‘Yes,’ I said; ‘I’ll light a fire with it. I see you’re busy.’

‘Oh, no! I’m not,’ he said. ‘I’ve nothing to do. What’s the good of my writing? I earn less and less with every book that comes out. I’m dying of poverty.’

‘That’s because you won’t consider the public.’

‘How can I consider the public when I don’t know what they want?’

‘Because you won’t take the trouble to find out. If I suggested a way to you of pleasing the public and making money, you’d kick me out of the room.’

And the words : ‘For instance, I’ve got a little gold-mine of yours in my pocket,’ were on the tip of my tongue, but I choked them back. ‘Daren’t risk it!’ I thought. ‘He’s given you the thing. *Carte blanche—cartes serrées!*’

I took the gold-mine away and promptly rough-shaped it for the film. It was perfectly easy, without any alteration of the story. Then I was faced with the temptation to put his name to it. The point was this : If I took it to a film company as an authorless scenario, I should only get authorless terms ; whereas, if I put his name to it, with a little talking I could double the terms at least. The film public didn’t know his name, of course, but the inner literary public did, and it’s wonderful how you can impress the market with the word ‘genius’ judiciously used. It was too dangerous, however ; and at last I hit on a middle course. I would take it to them with no name attached, but tell them it was by ‘a genius,’ and suggest that they could make capital out of the incognito. I knew they would feel it *was* by a genius.

I took it to an excellent company next day, with a covering note saying : ‘The author, a man of recognised literary genius, for certain reasons prefers to remain unknown.’ They took a fort-

night in which to rise, but they rose. They had to. The thing was too good in itself. For a week I played them over terms. Twice I delivered an ultimatum—twice they surrendered: they knew too well what they had got. I could have made a contract with £2,000 down which would have brought at least another £2,000 before the contract term closed; but I compounded for one that gave me £3,000 down, as likely to lead to less difficulty with Bruce. The terms were not a whit too good for what was really the 'acme' of scenarios. If I could have been quite open, I could certainly have done better. Finally, however, I signed the contract, delivered the manuscript, and received a cheque for the price. I was elated, and at the same time knew that my troubles were just beginning. With Bruce's feeling about the film, how the deuce should I get him to take the money? Could I go to his publishers, and conspire with them to trickle it out to him gradually, as if it came from his books? That meant letting them into the secret; besides, he was too used to receiving practically nothing from his books; it would lead him to make enquiry, and the secret was bound to come out. Could I get a lawyer to spring an inheritance on him? That would mean no end of lying and elaboration, even if a lawyer would consent. Should I send him the money in Bank of England notes, with the words: 'From a lifelong admirer of your genius'? I was afraid he would suspect a trick, or stolen notes,

and go to the police to trace them. Or should I just go, put the cheque on the table, and tell him the truth?

The question worried me terribly, for I didn't feel entitled to consult others who knew him. It was the sort of thing that, if talked over, would certainly leak out. It was not desirable, however, to delay cashing a big cheque like that. Besides, they had started on the production. It happened to be a slack time, with a dearth of good films, so that they were rushing it on. And in the meantime there was Bruce—starved of everything he wanted, unable to get away for want of money, depressed about his health and his future. And yet so completely had he always seemed to me different, strange, superior to this civilisation of ours, that the idea of going to him and saying simply: 'This is yours, for the film you wrote,' scared me. I could hear his: 'I? Write for the cinema? What do you mean?'

When I came to think of it, I had surely taken an extravagant liberty in marketing the thing without consulting him. I felt he would never forgive that, and my feeling towards him was so affectionate, even reverential, that I simply hated the idea of being cast out of his affections. At last I hit on a way that by introducing my own interest might break my fall. I cashed the cheque, lodged the money at my bank, drew my own cheque on it for the full amount, and armed with that and the contract, went to see him.

He was lying on two chairs, smoking his

Brazilians, and playing with a stray cat which had attached itself to him. He seemed rather less prickly than usual, and after beating about the bushes of his health and other matters, I began :

‘I’ve got a confession to make, Bruce.’

‘Confession !’ he said. ‘What confession ?’

‘You remember that skit on the film you wrote, and gave me, about six weeks ago ?’

‘No.’

‘Yes, you do—about an Octoroon.’

He chuckled. ‘Oh ! Ah ! That !’

I took a deep breath, and went on :

‘Well, I sold it ; and the price of course belongs to you.’

‘What ? Who’d print a thing like that ?’

‘It isn’t printed. It’s been made into a film—super-film, they call it.’

His hand came to a pause on the cat’s back, and he glared at me. I hastened on :

‘I ought to have told you what I was doing, but you’re so prickly, and you’ve got such confounded superior notions. I thought if I did, you’d be biting off your nose to spite your own face. The fact is, it made a marvellous scenario. Here’s the contract, and here’s a cheque on my bank for the price—£3,000. If you like to treat me as your agent, you owe me £300. I don’t expect it, but I’m not proud, like you, and I shan’t sneeze.’

‘Good God !’ he said.

‘Yes, I know. But it’s all nonsense, Bruce. You can carry scruples to altogether too great

lengths. Tainted source ! Everything's tainted, if you come to that. The film's a quite justified expression of modern civilisation—a natural outcome of the Age. It gives amusement ; it affords pleasure. It may be vulgar, it may be cheap, but we *are* vulgar, and we *are* cheap, and it's no use pretending we're not—not you, of course, Bruce, but people at large. A vulgar Age wants vulgar amusement, and if we can give it that amusement, we ought to ; life's not too cheery, anyway.'

The glare in his eyes was almost paralysing me, but I managed to stammer on :

' You live out of the world—you don't realise what humdrum people want ; something to balance the greyness, the—the banality of their lives. They want blood, thrill, sensation of all sorts. You didn't mean to give it them, but you have, you've done them a benefit, whether you wish to or not, and the money's yours and you've got to take it.'

The cat suddenly jumped down. I waited for the storm to burst.

' I know,' I dashed on, ' that you hate and despise the film——'

Suddenly his voice boomed out :

' Bosh ! What are you talking about ? Film ! I go there every other night.'

It was my turn to say : ' Good God ! ' And, ramming contract and cheque into his empty hand, I bolted, closely followed by the cat.✓

THE BUCKLES OF SUPERIOR DOSSET

1821-1863

IN the year 1821 'Superior Dosset' Forsyte came to Town—if not precisely on a milk-white pony. According to the testimony of Aunt Ann, noted for precision, to young Jolyon on holiday from Eton, the migration from Bosport was in fact tribal and effected in two post-shays and the Highflyer coach.

'It was after our dear mother's death, and our father—that is your grandfather, Jo dear—was very taciturn on the journey; he was never a man who showed his feelings. I had your Aunt Susan in arms, and your Uncle Timothy—two years old, such an interesting child, in the first post-shay with your grandfather. And your dear father, he was so dependable and very like you—he must have been fifteen then, just your age—he had your Aunts Juley and Hester with him and your Uncle Nicholas, who was four, in the second post-shay; and your Uncles James and Swithin and Roger were on the coach. I am afraid Swithin was very naughty with his pea-shooter on the journey. We started early in the morning, and we all went for the night to your

Great-Uncle Edgar's at Primrose Hill. I remember he still wore knee-breeches and a very large bunch of seals. Of course, *we* were all in black. Your grandfather wore black for two years after our dear mother's death ; he felt it very much, though he never said anything.'

'What was he like, Auntie?'

'Strongly-built, my dear, with a high colour. In those days they drank a great deal of wine, especially Madeira.'

'But what was he?'

'He began as a mason, dear.'

'A Freemason?'

'Not at first. A stonemason. You see, *his* father was a farmer, and he apprenticed your grandfather to a stonemason, so that he should learn all about building. I think it was a very wise decision, because in those days there were such opportunities for builders, so your grandfather soon made his way. He was becoming quite a warm man when we came to London.' And Aunt Ann's shrewd eyes appraised her nephew.

He had risen, and was standing, slender in his first tail-coat, against the mantelpiece, looking downward at his boots. Elegant the dear boy looked, but a little embarrassed, as if his nerves had received a shock. Of course, he was at Eton among the nobility. And she said with decision :

'We should never be ashamed of our origin, dear Jo. The Forsytes are very good country stock, and have always been men of their word,

and that is the great thing. And our dear mother was a lady in every respect. Her name was Pierce—a Devonshire family—and she was the daughter of a solicitor at Bosport who was very respected. He died bankrupt because his partner ran away with some funds, and all his fortune went to make up the loss. She had a sweet face and was most particular how we spoke and behaved. This is her miniature.’

Young Jolyon moved over and saw an oval face with fair hair parted in the middle and drawn in curves across the forehead, dark grey eyes looking up at him from rather deep beneath the brows, a chin with a delicate point, and shoulders shrouded in lace.

‘Your grandfather was devoted to her in his way. For years after we first came to London he worked all day long, and at night I used to see him sitting up in his little study with his plans and his estimates—he couldn’t bear to go to bed. And then he took to horse exercise. It was such a mercy.’

Young Jolyon looked up. His brow had cleared, as if his grandfather had at last done something creditable.

‘Of course, on the farm, when he was a boy, he used to ride. And when he took to it again, he went riding every day until his gout got too bad.’

‘Oh! had he gout, too, Aunt Ann?’

‘Yes, dear, gout was much more prevalent

'Yes, like his father before him; the name Jolyon goes with that. You must never forget that, dear Jo. It is a great responsibility.'

'I'd rather have the buckles without the responsibility, Auntie.'

His Aunt lowered her spectacles till they were below the aquilinity of her nose. So, she could see her nephew better, and her thin fingers with three rings and pointed nails interlaced slowly, as if tatting some slow conclusion. Dear Jo! Was he being taught to take things lightly? Eton—it was nice, of course, and very distinguished, but perhaps a little dangerous! And her eyes chased him down from the wave of fair hair on his forehead to the straps confining his trousers to his boots. Was he not becoming a little foppish?

'Your grandfather, dear, always took his position seriously. I could tell you a story——'

'Hooray!'

Aunt Ann frowned. Yes! It *would* do him good to hear.

'It was in the year when your dear father and his friend Nick Treffry had just set up for themselves in tea. That would be about six years after we came to London. Your grandfather had done very well with his building, so that he had been able to give all the boys a good education; your Uncle Nicholas especially was such a promising little chap, and your Uncle James was just in his articles—he was admitted a

solicitor afterwards on his twenty-first birthday, and that is the earliest possible. But in spite of all the expense we were to him, your grandfather had put by quite a lot of money; though we were still living on Primrose Hill and so we saw a great deal of your Uncle Edgar; and, indeed, your grandfather had invested some of his money in your Uncle's business——'

'What was that, Auntie?'

'Jute, dear. Your grandfather was not a partner with him, but he was interested. Uncle Edgar was not at all like your grandfather; he was a very amiable man, but rather weak, and I am afraid he paid too much attention to other people's advice. Anyway he was tempted to gamble for what I think is called "the rise." And very foolishly he did not consult your grandfather. So, of course, when your grandfather heard of it, he was in a regular stew. You see I took a little of our dear mother's place, and I can remember him saying: "What on earth is the chap about—weak-kneed beggar—gambling for a rise! Mark my words, Ann, he'll be in Queer Street in no time!"'

Aunt Ann paused, recalling that far scene. The stocky figure of her father bent forward over the mahogany of the old dining table now in the room below, his broad, short-fingered hand suddenly clenching, the flush of blood below his eyes, screwed up in the visioning of Queer Street.

'And was he, Auntie?'

‘Yes, dear. It was that dreadful year when everything went down suddenly, especially jute. Poor Uncle Edgar was so amiable that he never seemed to realise that other people could be hard and greedy.’

‘Was he ruined, Auntie?’

‘I was going to tell you. As I said, your grandfather was not in partnership with Uncle Edgar, and as soon as he heard what Uncle had done, he sold his investment and saved his bacon, as he would have called it. And then jute went down instead of up, and Uncle Edgar was threatened with bankruptcy. Your grandfather went through a dreadful time making up his mind whether to help him or not. You see, he knew it would mean years of set-back for him in his building business, and for all of us great economy, and going without things that we were accustomed to. And he felt your uncle’s conduct in not consulting him very much—he used to say bitter things about him. It all came to a head one evening when your Uncle Edgar cried—he was not a strong character. I can see him now : he had large red bandana handkerchiefs, and he sat there with his face all buried in one. Your grandfather was walking up and down talking about his expecting him to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for him, and he wasn’t going to, not he. I thought he would have had a fit. And then, suddenly, he stopped and looked a long time at Uncle Edgar. “Edgar,” he said, “you’re a

poor fish. But I'm the head of the family, and I'm not going to see the name dishonoured. Here, get out, and to-morrow I'll see you through."

'And did he, Auntie?'

'Yes, Jo. It was a terrible sacrifice. But I think we were all glad; we were fond of Uncle Edgar, and it would have made such a scandal to have him go bankrupt, especially as he had not been quite straight. We never saw very much of him after, but he died better off than ever, entirely owing to your grandfather. So you see, dear, it doesn't do to take responsibility lightly.' Her nephew had ceased to look at her, as if he had suddenly perceived why he had been told the story.

'I should have thought it did, Auntie, if he died better off than ever.'

Aunt Ann smiled. Really, the dear boy was very naughty!

'Jo,' she said, grave again, 'I can tell you another story of your grandfather.'

'Oh! do, Auntie!'

'This was in the thirties, very hard years for everybody; and your grandfather was building some houses in Brighton. He was always a man who cut his coat to fit his cloth; but he used to tell me that if he made five per cent. on his money with those houses, it would be all he could hope for. I remember it all very clearly because just then I was so hoping he would do well, I had a

special reason.' Aunt Ann paused, seeing again her special reason in pegtop trousers looking down at her all braided and crinolined on the sofa; hearing again his voice, so manly, saying: 'Dear Ann, may I speak to your father?' hearing again her own answer: 'Please wait, dear Edward, Papa is so preoccupied just now. But if, as I hope, things go well—next year I shall, I trust, be able to leave him and the dear children.'

'What special reason, Auntie?'

'Oh! never mind that, dear. As I was saying, your grandfather was extremely anxious because those houses meant turning the corner of all his difficulties. It was a dreadful year, and I am sorry to say there was a great deal of chicanery.'

'What is chicanery?'

'Chicanery, dear, means trying to get the better of your neighbour at all costs.'

'Did grandfather get the better of anyone?'

Aunt Ann looked at her nephew sharply.

'No,' she said, 'they got the better of him, Jo.'

'Oh! Go on, Auntie. How interesting! I do want to hear.'

'Well, one day your grandfather came home from Brighton in a dreadful taking. It was a long time before I could quieten him down to tell me what had happened. It seems that three of those houses wouldn't dry. The first houses were all right, so of course your grandfather never suspected anything. But the man who supplied the

building material had taken advantage to mix some of it with sea water instead of fresh. I could never make out what he gained by it, or whether he had done it out of ignorance, but your grandfather was convinced that he was a rascal. "They won't dry, they won't dry," he kept on saying. I think if he had died that moment those words would have been printed on his heart. You see, it meant ruination to his reputation as a builder. And then it seems somebody showed him a way by which he could make the houses seem dry although in wet weather they never really would be. That night I heard him, long after I went to bed, walking about in his room next door ; but in the morning I heard him mutter : "No, I'm jiggered if I will !" He had made up his mind, after a dreadful struggle, not to be party to any trick.'

'And what happened then, Auntie ?'

'Well, he just took those three houses down and built them afresh—it cost him thousands.'

'Didn't he make the man who used the sea water pay ?'

'He tried to, Jo ; but the man went bankrupt. It aged your grandfather very much. We *all* felt it dreadfully.'

Aunt Ann was silent, lost in memory of how she had felt it. Edward ! . . . Her nephew's voice recalled her.

'Grandfather didn't go bankrupt himself, did he, Auntie ?'

'No, Jo ; but very nearly. Perhaps it was all for the best. It made him very respected, and in after years he was always glad that he had been so above-board.'

She looked up startled ; young Jolyon was examining her face in a peculiar manner.

'I expect *you* had a sad time, Auntie.'

Aunt Ann's lips firmed themselves against the suspicion of being pitied.

'So you see, dear,' she said, 'your grandfather had good principles, and that is the great thing.'

'Did he go to Church, and that ?'

'Not very much. He was brought up to be a Wesleyan, so he never quite approved of Church. He used to say the service was full of fallals. Of course, *we* all liked Church much better than Chapel, and he never interfered with our going.'

'I expect he was glad not to go at all, really.'

Aunt Ann covered her mouth with a little paper fan.

'You mustn't be flippant, dear.'

'Oh ! no, Auntie ; I meant it.'

'Well, Jo, I don't think I should call your grandfather a very religious man after our dear mother's death. He always grudged that so much.'

'Did my father get on well with him ?'

'Not very. Your father was so much our mother's boy.'

'I see.'

'Yes, dear, your grandfather was always so occupied that he hadn't much time for us children. I think he was perhaps fonder of me than of any of us.'

'I expect that was because you were so good, Auntie.'

'Hssh! Jo. You mustn't make fun of me. I was the only one old enough to talk to when our mother died.'

'I thought you said my father was my age.'

'Yes, but in those days people did not talk to children as they do now.'

Young Jolyon did not reply, but he tilted his chin slightly. Children!

'How much money did he leave, Auntie, after all that?'

'Thirty thousand pounds, dear, divided equally amongst the ten of us—he was very just.'

Young Jolyon took out his watch; it was an old one of his father's, and he liked to take it out.

'I must go now, Auntie; I'm meeting a man at Madame Tussaud's. Oh! might I have those buckles?'

Aunt Ann's eyes lingered on him; he was her favourite, though to admit it was not in her character.

'Are you to be trusted with them, dear?'

'Of course I am.'

'They're an heirloom, Jo. Don't you think we'd better wait till you're older?'

'Oh! Auntie, as if I wasn't——!'

Aunt Ann's fingers rummaged in the little drawer.

'Well, on condition that you take the greatest care of them. And you mustn't ever wear them, until you go to Court.'

'Do they wear buckles at Court?'

'I believe so, dear. I have never been. Here they are.'

From folds of tissue paper she took them out—of old blackish paste set in silver. Very discreetly, on the bit of black velvet to which they were attached, the two buckles gleamed.

Young Jolyon took them in his hand. Into which of his pockets would they go without spoiling a man's figure?

'I like them, Auntie.'

'Yes, dear, they are genuine old paste. Have you somewhere safe to keep them?'

'Oh! yes, I've got lots of drawers.' He placed the buckles in his tail coat pocket, and bent over to kiss his Aunt.

'You won't sit on them, Jo?'

'We never sit on our tails, Auntie.'

His Aunt's eyes followed him wistfully to the door, where he turned to wave his hand. Dear Jo! He *was* growing up! Such a pleasure to see him always. He would be quite a distinguished-looking man some day, like his dear

father, only with more advantages. But had she done right to give him the buckles? Was he not too young to realise the responsibility? She closed the little drawer whence she had taken them, and before her eyes there passed the pageant of old days—days of her childhood and her womanhood, with no youth in between. Days of her own responsibility—mother to all the family from the age of twenty on! Just that one abortive courtship—‘a lick and a promise,’ Swithin would call it—snuffed out by sea water and her father’s reputation. Did she regret it? No! How could she? If her father had not been honest about those houses—a man of his word—then, why then she could not have given his buckles to dear Jo, as symbols of headship and integrity. Edward! Well, he had married very happily after all. She had not grudged him the pleasure; his wife had soon had twins. Perhaps it was all for the best: they were always very good to her, her brothers and sisters that she had been a mother to, and it was such a pleasure to see their dear little children growing up. Why, Soamey would be coming in directly on his way back from the Zoo; it was his eighth birthday and she had his present ready; a box of bricks, so that he could build himself a house—like his grandfather, only not—not with sea water . . . Ah! . . . Um! . . . Just a little nap, perhaps, before the dear little chap came—perhaps a little—um—ah!—

The thin lips, so generally compressed, puffed slightly in their breathing above that square chin resting on her cameo. The delicious surge of slumber swayed over the brain under the cork-screwed curls ; the lips opened once and a word came forth : ‘ Bub—Buckles.’

A SAD AFFAIR, 1867

IN 1866, at the age of nineteen, young Jolyon Forsyte left Eton and went up to Cambridge in the semi-whiskered condition of those days. An amiable youth of fair scholastic and athletic attainments, and more susceptible to emotions, æsthetic and otherwise, than most young barbarians, he went up a little intoxicated on the novels of Whyte-Melville. From continually reading about whiskered dandies, garbed to perfection and imperturbably stoical in the trying circumstances of debt and discomfiture, he had come to the conviction that to be whiskered and unmoved by Fortune was quite the ultimate hope of existence. There was something not altogether ignoble at the back of his creed. He passed imperceptibly into a fashionable set, and applied himself to the study of whist. All the heroes of Whyte-Melville played whist admirably ; all rode horses to distraction. Young Jolyon joined the Drag, and began to canter over to Newmarket, conveniently situated for Cambridge undergraduates. Like many youths before and after him, he had gone into residence with little or no idea of the value of money ; and in the main this ' sad affair ' must

be traced to the fact that while he had no idea of the value of money, and, in proportion to his standards, not much money, his sire, Old Jolyon, had much idea of the value of money, and still more money. The hundred pounds placed to his credit for his first term seemed to young Jolyon an important sum, and he had very soon none of it left. This surprised him, but was of no great significance, because all Whyte-Melville's dandies were in debt ; indeed, half their merit consisted in an imperturbable indifference to mere financial liability. Young Jolyon proceeded, therefore, to get into debt. It was easy, and 'the thing.' At the end of his first term he had spent just double his allowance. He was not vicious nor particularly extravagant—but what, after all, was money? Besides, to live on the edge of Fortune was the only way to show that one could rise above it. Not that he deliberately hired horses, bought clothes, boots, wine and tobacco, for that purpose ; still, there was in a sense a principle involved. This is made plain, because it was exactly what was not plain to Old Jolyon later on. He, as a young man, with not half his son's allowance, had never been in debt, had paid his way, and made it. But then he had not had the advantages of Eton, Cambridge, and the novels of Whyte-Melville. He had simply gone into Tea.

Young Jolyon going up for his second term, with another hundred pounds from an unconscious sire, at once perceived that if he paid his

debts, or any appreciable portion of them, he would have no money for the term's expenses. He therefore applied his means to the more immediate ends of existence—College fees, 'wines,' whist, riding, and so forth—and left his debts to grow.

At the end of his first year he was fully three hundred pounds to the bad, and beginning to be reflective. Unhappily, however, he went up for his second year with longer whiskers and a more perfect capacity for enjoyment than ever. He had the best fellows in the world for friends, life was sweet, Schools still far off. He was liked and he liked being liked; he had, in fact, a habit of existence eminently unsuited to the drawing-in of horns.

Now his set were very pleasant young men from Eton and Harrow and Winchester, some of whom had more worldly knowledge than young Jolyon, and some of whom had more money, but none of whom had more sense of responsibility. It was in the rooms of 'Cuffs' Charwell (the name was pronounced Cherrell, who was taking Divinity Schools, and was afterwards the Bishop) that whist was first abandoned for baccarat, under the auspices of 'Donny' Covercourt. That young scion of the Shropshire Covercourts had discovered this exhilarating pastime, indissolubly connected with the figure Nine, at a French watering-place during the Long Vacation, and when he returned to Cambridge was brimming over with it, in his admirably impassive manner. Now,

young Jolyon was not by rights a gambler ; that is to say, he was self-conscious about the thing, never properly carried away. Moreover, in spite of Whyte-Melville, he was by this time indubitably nervous about his monetary position—on all accounts, therefore, inclined to lose rather than to win. But when such cronies as ‘Cuffs’ Cherrell, ‘Feathers’ Totteridge, Guy Winlow, and ‘Donny’ himself—best fellows in the world—were bent on baccarat, who could be a ‘worm’ and wriggle away ?

On the fourth evening his turn came to take the ‘bank.’ What with paying off his most pestiferous creditors and his College fees, so unfeelingly exacted in advance, he had just fifteen pounds left—the term being a fortnight spent. He was called on to take a ‘bank’ of one hundred. With a sinking heart and a marbled countenance, therefore, he sat down at the head of the green board. This was his best chance, so far, of living up to his whiskers—come what would, he must not fail the shades of ‘Digby Grand,’ ‘Daisy Waters,’ and the ‘Honble. Crasher’ !

He lost from the first moment ; with one or two momentary flickers of fortune in his favour, his descent to Avernus was one of the steadiest ever made. He sat through it with his heart kept in by very straight lips. He rose languidly at the end of half an hour with the ‘bank’ broken, and, wanly smiling, signed his I.O.U’s, including one to ‘Donny’ Covercourt for a cool eighty. Restoring

himself with mulled claret, he resumed his seat at the board, but, for the rest of the evening, neither won nor lost. He went across the Quad to his own rooms with a queasy feeling—he was seeing his father's face. For this was his first unpayable debt of honour, so different from mere debts to tradesmen. And, sitting on his narrow bed in his six-foot by fifteen bedroom, he wrestled for the means of payment. Paid somehow it must be ! Would his Bank let him overdraw to the amount ? He could see the stolid faces behind that confounded counter. Not they ! And if they didn't ? That brute Davids ? Or—the Dad ? Which was worse ? Oh ! the Dad was worse ! For, suddenly, young Jolyon was perceiving that from the beginning he had lived up here a life that his father would not understand. With a sort of horror he visualised his effort to explain it to that high-domed forehead, and the straight glance that came from so deep behind. No ! Davids was the ticket ! After all, ' Daisy Waters,' ' Digby Grand,' the ' Honble. Crasher,' and the rest of the elect—had they jibbed at money-lenders ? Not so ! Did ' Feathers,' did ' Donny ' ? What else were money-lenders for but lending money ? Trying to cheer himself with that thought, he fell asleep from sheer unhappiness.

Next morning, at his Bank, very tight lips assured him that an overdraft without security was not in the day's work. Young Jolyon arched his eyebrows, ran fingers through a best whisker,

drawled the words : ' It's of no consequence ! ' and went away, stiffening his fallen crest. In front of him he saw again his father's face, and he couldn't stand it. He sought the rooms of ' Feathers ' Totteridge. That engaging youth had just had his ' tosh ' and was seated over devilled kidneys, in his dressing-gown.

Young Jolyon said :

' Feathers, old cock, give me a note to that brute Davids ! '

Feathers stared. ' What ho, friend ! ' he said. ' Plucked ? He'll skin you, Jo. '

' Can't be helped, ' said young Jolyon, glumly.

He went away armed with the note, and in the afternoon sought the abode of Mr. Rufus Davids. The Hebraic benefactor read the note, and bent on young Jolyon the glance of criticism.

' How mutth do you want, Mithter Forthyte ? ' he said.

' One hundred and fifty. '

' That will cotht you two hundred thicth month from now. I give good termth. '

Good terms ! Young Jolyon checked the opening of his lips. One didn't chaffer.

' I like to know my cuthtomerth, you know, Mithter Forthyte. I athk a little bird or two. Come in to-morrow. '

' You can take me or leave me, ' said young Jolyon.

' Thatth all right, Mithter Forthyte. To-morrow afternoon. '

Young Jolyon nodded, and went out.

It hadn't been so bad, after all ; and, cantering over to Newmarket, he almost forgot how ' *Post equitem sedet atra cura.*'

In the afternoon of the following day he received one hundred and fifty pounds for his autograph, and seeking out 'Donny' and the others who held his I.O.U's, discharged the lot. Not without a sense of virtue did he sit down to an evening collation in his rooms. He was eating cold wild duck, when his door was knocked on.

'Come in !' he shouted. And, there—in overcoat, top hat in hand—his father stood. . . .

Sitting in the City offices of those great tea-men, 'Forsyte and Treffry,' old Jolyon had been handed, with the country post, a communication marked : 'Confidential.'

'Great Cury,
'Cambridge.

'DEAR SIR,—

'In accordance with your desire that we should advise you of anything unusual, expressed to us when you opened your son's account a year ago, we beg to notify you that Mr. Jolyon Forsyte, Junr., made application to us to-day for an overdraft of one hundred pounds. We did not feel justified in granting this without your permission, but shall be happy to act in accordance with your decision in this matter.

'We are, dear Sir, with the compliments of the season,

'Your faithful servants,
'BROTHERTON AND DARNETT.'

Old Jolyon had sat some time regarding this missive with grave and troubled eyes. He had then placed it in the breast pocket of his frock coat, and taking out a little comb, had passed it through his grey Dundrearys and moustachios.

‘I am going down to Cambridge, Timming. Get me a cab.’

In the cab and in the train, and again in the cab from the station at Cambridge, he had brooded, restless and unhappy. Why had the boy not come to *him*? What had he been doing to require an overdraft like that? He had a good allowance. He had never said anything about being pressed for money. This way and that way he turned it in his mind, and whichever way he turned it, the conclusion was that it showed weakness—weakness to want the money; above all, weakness not to have come to his father first. Of all things, old Jolyon disliked weakness. And so there he stood, tall and grey-headed, in the doorway.

‘I’ve come down, Jo. I’ve had a letter I don’t like.’

Through young Jolyon raced the thought: ‘Davids!’ and his heart sank into his velvet slippers. He said, however, drawling:

‘Charmed to see you, Sir. You haven’t had dinner? Can you eat wild duck? This claret’s pretty good.’

Taking his father’s hat and coat, he placed him with his back to the fire, plied the bellows,

and bawled down the stairway for forks and another wild duck. And while he bawled he felt as if he could be sick, for he had a great love for his father, and this was why he was afraid of him. And old Jolyon, who had a great love for his son, was not sorry to stand and warm his legs and wait.

They ate the wild duck, drank the claret, talking of the weather, and small matters. They finished, and young Jolyon said :

‘ Take that “froust,” Dad ’ ; and his heart tried to creep from him into the floor.

Old Jolyon clipped a cigar, handed another to his son, and sat down in the old leather chair on one side of the fire ; young Jolyon sat in another old leather chair on the other side, and they smoked in silence, till old Jolyon took the letter from his pocket and handed it across.

‘ What’s the meaning of it, Jo ? Why didn’t you come to me ? ’

Young Jolyon read the letter with feelings of relief, dismay, and anger with his Bank. Why on earth had they written ? He felt his whiskers, and said :

‘ Oh ! That ! ’

Old Jolyon sat looking at him with a sharp deep gravity.

‘ I suppose it means that you’re in debt ? ’ he said, at last.

Young Jolyon shrugged : ‘ Oh ! well, naturally. I mean, one must——’

‘ Must what ? ’

'Live like other fellows, Dad.'

'Other fellows? Haven't you at least the average allowance?'

Young Jolyon had. 'But that's just it,' he said eagerly. 'I'm not in an average set.'

'Then why did you get into such a set, Jo?'

'I don't know, Sir. School and one thing and another. It's an awfully good set.'

'H'm!' said old Jolyon, deeply. 'Would this hundred pounds have cleared you?'

'Cleared me! Oh! well—yes, of what matters.'

'What matters?' repeated old Jolyon. 'Doesn't every debt matter?'

'Of course, Dad; but everybody up here owes money to tradesmen. I mean, they expect it.'

Old Jolyon's eyes narrowed and sharpened.

'Tradesmen? What matters are not tradesmen? What then? A woman?' The word came out hushed and sharp.

Young Jolyon shook his head. 'Oh! No.'

Old Jolyon's attitude relaxed a little, as if with some intimate relief. He flipped the ash off his cigar.

'Have you been gambling, then, Jo?'

Struggling to keep his face calm and his eyes on his father's, young Jolyon answered:

'A little.'

'Gambling!' Something of distress and consternation in the sound young Jolyon couldn't bear, and hastened on:

‘Well, Dad, I don’t mean to go on with it. But Newmarket, you know, and—and—one doesn’t like to be a prig.’

‘Prig? For not gambling? I don’t understand. A gambler!’

And, again, at that note in his voice, young Jolyon cried:

‘I really don’t care for it, Dad; I mean I’m just as happy without.’

‘Then why do you do it? It’s weak. I don’t like weakness, Jo.’

Young Jolyon’s face hardened. The Dad would never understand. To be a swell—superior to Fate! Hopeless to explain! He said lamely:

‘All the best chaps——’

Old Jolyon averted his eyes. For at least two minutes he sat staring at the fire.

‘I’ve never gambled, or owed money,’ he said at last, with no pride in the tone of his voice, but with deep conviction. ‘I must know your position, Jo. What is it? Speak the truth. How much do you owe, and to whom?’

Young Jolyon had once been discovered cribbing. This was worse. It was as little possible as it had been then to explain that everybody did it. He said sullenly:

‘I suppose—somewhere about three hundred, to tradesmen.’

Old Jolyon’s glance went through and through him.

‘And that doesn’t matter? What else?’

fire. His father did not, could not know what a fellow had to do, how behave to—to be superior to fortune. He was old-fashioned ! But, besides loving him, young Jolyon admired his father, admired him physically and mentally—as much—yes, more than the Honble. Crasher or Digby Grand. And he was miserable.

He sat up late, making a list of his debts as well as anyone could who had the habit of tearing up his bills. Repressed emotion tossed his slumbers, and when he woke the thought of the joint visit to Mr. Davids made him feel unwell.

Old Jolyon came at ten o'clock, looking almost haggard. He took the list from his son.

'Are these all, Jo ?'

'So far as I can remember.'

'Send any others in to me. Which of your friends are the gamblers ?'

Young Jolyon coloured.

'You must excuse me, Dad.'

Old Jolyon looked at him.

'Very well !' he said. 'We'll go to this money-lender now.'

They walked forth. By God's mercy no one had bounced in on his way to Newmarket. Young Jolyon caught sight of 'Donny' Covercourt on the far side of the quadrangle and returned him no greeting. Quite silent, side by side, father and son passed out into the street. Except for old Jolyon's remark :

'There's no end to these Colleges, it seems,'

they did not speak until they reached the office of Mr. Davids, above a billiard room.

Old Jolyon ascended, stumping the stairs with his umbrella ; young Jolyon followed with his head down. He was bitterly ashamed ; it is probable that old Jolyon was even more so.

The money-lender was in his inner office, just visible through the half-open doorway. Old Jolyon pushed the door with his umbrella.

Mr. Davids rose, apparently surprised, and stood looking round his nose in an ingratiating manner.

‘ This is my father,’ said young Jolyon, gazing deeply at his boots.

‘ Mr. Davids, I think ? ’ began old Jolyon.

‘ Yeth, Thir. What may I have the pleasure——’

‘ You were good enough yesterday to advance my son the sum of a hundred and fifty pounds, for which he signed a promissory note for an extortionate amount. Kindly give me that note, and take this cheque in satisfaction.’

Mr. Davids washed his hands.

‘ For what amount ith your cheque, Thir ? ’

Old Jolyon took a cheque from his pocket and unfolded it.

‘ For your money, and one day’s interest at ten per cent.’

Mr. Davids threw up his well-washed hands.

‘ Oh ! No, Mithter Forthyte ; no ! Thath not bithneth. Give me a cheque for the amount of

the promithory note, and you can have it. I'm not ancthious to be paid—not at all.'

Old Jolyon clapped his hat on his head.

'You will accept my cheque!' he said, and thrust it under the money-lender's eyes.

Mr. Davids examined it, and said:

'You take me for a fool, it theemth.'

'I take you for a knave,' said old Jolyon.

'Sixty-six per cent., forsooth!'

Mr. Davids recoiled in sheer surprise.

'I took a great rithk to lend your thon that money.'

'You took no risk whatever. One day's interest at ten per cent. is ninepence three-farthings; I've made it tenpence. Be so good as to give me that note.'

Mr. Davids shook his head.

'Very well,' said old Jolyon. 'I've made some inquiries about you. I go straight from here to the Vice-Chancellor.'

Mr. Davids again began to wash his hands.

'And thuppothe,' he said, 'I go to your thon's College and tell them that I lend him thith money?'

'Do!' said old Jolyon; 'do! Come, Jo!' He turned and walked to the door, followed by his agonised but unmoved son.

'Thtop!' said Mr. Davids. 'I don't want to make no trouble.'

Old Jolyon's eyes twinkled under his drawn brows.

'Oh!' he said, without turning, 'you don't! Make haste, then. I give you two minutes,' and he took out his watch.

Young Jolyon stood looking dazedly at the familiar golden object. Behind him he could hear Mr. Davids making haste.

'Here it ith, Mithter Forthyte, here it ith!' Old Jolyon turned.

'Is that your signature, Jo?'

'Yes,' said young Jolyon, dully.

'Take it, then, and tear it up.'

Young Jolyon took, and tore it savagely.

'Here's your cheque,' said old Jolyon.

Mr. Davids grasped the cheque, changing his feet rapidly.

'Ith not bithneth, really ith not bithneth,' he repeated.

'The deuce it isn't,' said old Jolyon; 'you may thank your stars I don't go to the Vice-Chancellor, into the bargain. Good-bye to you!' He stumped his umbrella and walked out.

Young Jolyon followed, sheepishly.

'Where's the station, Jo?'

Young Jolyon led the way, and they walked on, more silent than ever.

At last old Jolyon said:

'This has been a sad affair. It's your not coming to me, Jo, that hurt.'

Young Jolyon's answer was strangled in his throat.

‘And don’t gamble, my boy. It’s weak-minded. Well, here we are !’

They turned into the station. Old Jolyon bought *The Times*. They stood together, silent on the platform, till the London train came in ; then young Jolyon put his hand through his father’s arm, and squeezed it. Old Jolyon nodded :

‘I shan’t allude to this again, Jo. But there’s just one thing : If you must be a swell, remember that you’re a gentleman too. Good-bye, my boy !’ He laid his hand on his son’s shoulder, turned quickly and got in.

Young Jolyon stood with bared head, watching the train go out. He then walked, as well as he knew how, back to College.

Indeed, yes ! A sad affair !

REVOLT AT ROGER'S, 1870

WHEN the house of Roger Forsyte in Prince's Gate was burgled in the autumn of 1870, Smith was undoubtedly drunk and made no serious attempt to rebut the accusation. A broad man of extremely genial disposition, he had in the few months of his butlerdom in Roger's new house endeared himself to the young Rogers, and even Roger was wont to speak of him as 'an amiable chap.' To be drunk without anyone's knowing, is a tort; to be discovered drunk, a misdemeanour; to be drunk when burglary is committed under one's nose, a crime, if not a felony. This, at least, was Roger's view, and he acted on it by immediate dismissal. His spoons had gone and Smith must go, too.

'If you hadn't been drunk,' he said, 'you'd have heard the ruffians. Call yourself a butler—you're a disgrace.'

'Yes, Sir,' said Smith, humbly, 'a glass has always been my weakness, but I never thought it'd come to this.'

'Well, it has,' said Roger, 'and so have you. Off you go this very day, and don't come to me for a character.'

In mitigation of Roger's harshness it will be remembered that in those days there was no such practice as insurance against burglary. Indeed, it was Roger (always original) who started the habit, and he had to go to Lloyd's to get it done.

'It's the most barefaced thing I ever knew,' he added. The plate-basket, indeed, with all the spoons, forks, salt-cellars and pepper-pots of Roger's ménage, had been rived practically from under the nose of the intoxicated Smith snoring on the turn-up bedstead in his own pantry. He had still been asleep, indeed, with a glass and empty whisky bottle by his bedside, when the page-boy entered in the morning.

Smith having withdrawn to his pantry, with his tail between his legs, Roger repaired to his bedroom, where in the four-poster his wife still lay thinking about less than usual, and put the matter in a few forcible words.

'Oh! Roger, what a pity! Such an amiable man. The children will be very upset.'

'Fiddlesticks!' said Roger. 'I must go out and see the police. But they're no good. Precious little chance of getting anything back.'

Mrs. Roger remained lying, flat as ever. She had been married to him seventeen years, and if she now had a life of her own, no one knew where she kept it.

Smith, on the other hand, upright in his shirt-sleeves; had an expression on his broad and

amiable face as though he had mislaid his trousers. To him thus standing the pantry door was flung open, and in the doorway stood Miss Francie. Francie Forsyte was then aged twelve, a dark-haired child with thin legs always outgrowing their integuments. Her Celtic-grey eyes shone ominously.

'You're not to go, Smith. I won't have it. You couldn't help being drunk when the burglars came.'

'Ush! Miss Francie,' said Smith, 'the Master says I've got to.'

Francie put a hand into his.

'Dear Smith!'

Smith's round face grew almost long.

'It's my fault, Miss; I *was* tipsy, there's no denyin'.'

'But how could you tell the burglars were coming?'

'I couldn't, Miss Francie, and that's a fact.'

'Well, then!'

'If I 'adn't been tipsy,' said Smith with sudden violence, '*I'd* 'ave given 'em what for!' And he worked his arm up to the angle which best displayed his formidable biceps.

'Oh! Smith,' said Francie, 'you *are* strong! Feel; I haven't got *any*!' And she angled her arm, thin, like a stick. Then the thought coming to her that soon there would be no Smith to show her lack of muscle to, the water started into her eyes.

'You're *not* to go,' she cried again. 'Here's Eustace, he'll say so too.'

The youngest but one of the five young Rogers was now eleven, dark-haired and thin-faced like his sister, and, like her, grey-eyed, but of a calm which contrasted forcibly with Francie's fervour. He was recovering from the mumps, which had conveniently delayed his return to school.

'Have you really got to go, Smiff?' he said. 'I wouldn't, if I were you. I should just stay.'

Smith smiled. His smile was that of the sun at noonday.

'Faver'll forget,' added Eustace.

Smith closed an eye, a practice which beyond all things endeared him to children.

'Will 'e, Master Eustace? I don't fink.'

'I do fink,' said Eustace. 'The best way wiv Faver is to take no notice. He can't birch *you*; look at your muscle.'

Again Smith crooked his arm to the proper position. He never spent ten minutes with the children without having to do this at least once.

'Smith,' said Francie, 'we'll come with you and speak to Father.'

Smith shook his head.

'I expect he hasn't seen your muscle,' said Eustace.

Smith smiled. Like all powerful, good-tempered, easy-going men, he was unable to say 'No.'

'That's settled then,' said Francie ; 'when Father comes in, Eustace and I will come for you. Come along, Eustace.'

She turned at the door : 'You shan't go—*dear Smith !*'

Smith in the centre of his pantry, slowly shook his rounded head.

He was still in undetermined mood when visited by the constable whom Roger had set in motion. Now the temperament of Smith was pre-eminently suited to the police. Sunk in humility, without edge, and highly human, it appealed to authority as cream to a cat. The constable, who had come to carp and question, remained to chat and quaff. He quaffed Roger's beer, and said :

'S'far as I can see, 'twas accidental like ; a man may sleep so sound, no burglar'd wake 'im. That was your trouble, mate. You'd 'ad a nightcap no doubt. I'll do me best with your governor.'

Upstairs in the dining-room Mrs. Roger was staring at the bronze clock and rehearsing a sentence which began :

'Roger, I wish you would reconsider your decision about Smith ; there are many reasons why——' and then nothing would come but : 'it will be out of the frying-pan into the fire,' which she could not feel to be quite dignified.

Unaware of these forces being marshalled against him, Roger, alert, and with an eye on a

new board announcing the sale of a house by auction, returned from the police station where he had been rendering a just and faithful account of his silver, and entered his hall with the latch-key which he had been one of the first householders to have made. As he divested himself of his overcoat a light, thin, ghostly shape flitted from the darkness under the stairs into the smell of mutton rising from the basement; another shape at the top of the stairs bestrode the banisters, waited till Roger had entered the dining-room, slid down with a run, and vanished also.

Startled by her husband's entry, Mrs. Roger took the stopper out of the cut glass bottle of pickled walnuts on the sideboard, and said :

‘ Oh ! Roger, I wish—I wish——’

‘ What do you wish ? ’ said Roger. ‘ Some nonsense. Don't let that smell out ; I can't bear a vinegary smell.’

‘ It's Smith,’ murmured Mrs. Roger. ‘ I wish you——’

‘ That'll do,’ said Roger ; ‘ he's got to go.’

Mrs. Roger stoppered the bottle.

‘ Oh ! very well, dear ; only where we shall get——’

‘ Plenty of good fish in the sea,’ said Roger.

‘ Where's that policeman they sent round ? ’

‘ He's still in the basement, I fancy.’

‘ He would be. They're no good ! What's this ? ’

Through the doorway was coming a proces-

sion led by Francie. It took up a position on the far side of the mahogany—from left to right, Francie, Smith, Eustace, and the policeman.

'How's this, Smith?' said Roger, caressing his left whisker. 'I told you to be off. Have you got something to say?'

'Yes,' said Francie, her voice shrill: 'Smith's not going.'

'What!' cried Roger.

'All wight, Faver!' said Eustace quietly.

'All right? What d'you mean by that, you impudent young shaver?'

'Seems as 'ow your butler was asleep, Sir,' said the constable impressively.

'Of course he was asleep. He was drunk.'

'Well, Sir, I'd 'ardly call it that,' said the constable. 'Not up to snuff at the moment, as you might say.'

'If you've any excuse to make, Smith,' said Roger, 'make it before you pack off.'

Smith shook his head. 'None, Sir, I'm sure.'

On one side and the other Francie and Eustace tugged at his sleeves, as if inciting him to show his muscle.

'Very well then,' said Roger, 'you can go. I'll talk to you in a moment, constable. You children run off, and don't let me catch you—'

'If Smith goes,' said Francie, loudly, 'we're going too.'

Roger stared. It was his first experience of revolt.

‘Go to my study, you two,’ he said, ‘and wait till I come. Mary, take them out.’

But over Mrs. Roger a spell seemed to have been cast; she did not move. Crimson shame had covered Smith’s face; the constable stood stolid. Roger’s spare figure stiffened. He made but half of either Smith or the constable, but the expression on his face, sharp, firm and sour, redressed the balance.

‘Go along,’ he said to Smith.

Smith moved towards the door, but the two children had placed their backs against it. Roger’s very whiskers seemed to go red.

‘This is too much of a good thing,’ burst from his tightened lips.

At this moment of exquisite deadlock the sense of duty which dominated a sober Smith came to the rescue. With a deep sigh he took a child by the belt with each hand, lifted them bodily from the door, set them down, and went out.

‘Go to my study, you two,’ said Roger again.

The two children went out into the hall.

‘Are you going to the study, Fwancie?’

‘He’ll birch us.’

‘He shan’t,’ said Eustace. ‘Let’s arm ourselves with knives.’

‘No,’ said Francie; ‘let’s go away with Smith.’

‘Smiff will only bwing us back,’ said Eustace; ‘let’s go by ourselves.’

‘All right,’ said Francie.

'We'll take Faver's umbwella and our money-box.'

'We shan't be able to open it.'

'No, but we can sell it to someone ; it wattles.'

'All right, quick !'

With their father's umbrella and the locked money-box, the two children opened the front door and, running across Kensington Road, were soon in Hyde Park, the money-box rattling all the way.

'How much is there in it ?' said Eustace.

'Four shillings and elevenpence.'

'Let's sell it for five shillings, then. The box cost a shilling.'

'Who to ?'

'We'll find an old gentleman.'

They walked along the Row under the umbrella, for it was raining. Francie had neither hat nor coat, Eustace his school cap, black with a red stripe.

'Look !' said Francie. 'There's one !'

They approached a bench whereon sat a tall, bulky figure, who had placed his hands on the handle of his stick with a view to rising. He had a grey goatee beard, a grey beaver hat, and a long watch-chain looped on his brown velvet waistcoat.

Francie, who carried the money-box, held it out.

'Hullo !' said the old gentleman ; 'what have you got there ?'

'It's our money-box,' said Francie; 'we want to sell it. It's got four and elevenpence in coppers.'

'But it's worf more,' said Eustace.

'The deuce it is!' said the old gentleman. His voice rumbled, and his eyes, grey and rather bloodshot, twinkled. 'Why do you want to sell it?'

'Because we haven't got the key,' said Francie.

'So we can't get the money out,' added Eustace. 'It belongs to us and we shall want it out, you see.'

'What d'you want it out for?' said the old gentleman.

'To buy our dinner.'

'You're a rum couple,' said the old gentleman.

'What's your name?'

'Will you buy the box?' said Eustace: 'then we'll tell you.'

'What should I do with the box, heh?'

'You could carry it in one of your big pockets.'

'Well,' said the old gentleman, 'here's five bob. Hand it over. Now, what's your name?'

'Forsyte,' said Francie. 'I'm Francie, and this is Eustace.'

'Forsyte?' grunted the old gentleman. 'The deuce it is! Where d'you live?'

'Are you to be twusted?' asked Eustace, tilting the umbrella backwards.

The old gentleman uttered a guffaw.

'What do you want to trust me for?'

'Well, you see,' said Eustace cautiously, 'we're running away for the present.'

'Oh!' said the old gentleman, and rumbled.

'We had to,' said Francie, 'because of Smith. It's a long story.'

'Well,' said the old gentleman, rising, 'come and have your dinner with me, and tell me all about it. What's your father's Christian name?'

'Roger.'

'Oh! Ah!' said the old gentleman. 'Well, I know your uncles Jolyon and Swithin, and your cousin Jo. My name's Nicholas Treffry. Ever heard it?'

'No,' said Eustace.

'I have,' cried Francie. 'Father says you're notorious. What does that mean?'

The 'notorious' Mr. Treffry chuckled.

'My carriage is out there at the Gate. Come along and I'll show you why he calls me notorious.'

The two children looked at each other, then Eustace whispered:

'All wight, he's wespectable.'

'The deuce, he is!' said Mr. Treffry unexpectedly. 'Come along, young shavers.'

The two children accompanied him silently to the Gate. Outside stood a pair of fine horses harnessed to a phaeton with the hood up. A tiger stood at their heads.

'Up you get!' said Mr. Treffry.

Francie mounted with alacrity. Eustace hung back.

‘Where are you going to take us?’

‘The Albany—know it?’

‘Yes,’ said Eustace, ‘George went there once.’

‘Respectable enough for you, heh?’

‘Yes,’ said Eustace, and furling the umbrella, mounted beside his sister.

Mr. Treffry clambered heavily to his driver’s seat alongside.

‘Let go, Tim.’

The horses sprang forward, the tiger let go, and, running, caught on behind.

The carriage swung from side to side; Francie’s eyes danced.

‘I—I like it,’ she said.

‘Your father’d have a fit, if he saw us,’ chuckled Mr. Treffry. ‘He lives in Prince’s Gate, doesn’t he?’

Eustace looked round at him, and in imitation of Smith, closed his left eye.

‘You’re a cool young man,’ said Mr. Treffry.

The pavements of those days not being precisely smooth, they made but a rough passage to the Albany, where, after they had been made clean and comfortable under the auspices of the valet, the children repaired to a low panelled room with pictures of dogs and horses on the walls, a case of guns in one corner, and some black Chinese tea chests, embossed with figures and flowers in coloured lacquer.

'Now,' said Mr. Treffry, 'let's have some prog.'

The prog consisted of grouse and pancakes and spiky artichokes, and each child was given a glass of wine.

'Well,' said Mr. Treffry, 'what was it all about, heh?'

Francie related the story of Smith.

'H'm!' Mr. Treffry rumbled. 'So your father lost his spoons?'

'And we've got his umbywella,' said Eustace.

'Well, I'll see you're not birched, though I daresay you deserve it. Your mother must be in a pretty stew. Green, have the phaeton round again.'

They made an even rougher passage back to Prince's Gate.

'Here's your money-box,' said Mr. Treffry.

'But you bought it!'

'Tut! Here! My dear! Take my card to your master.'

Francie caught the maid by the sleeve.

'Has Smith gone, Annie?'

'Not yet, Miss. We've all been in a state about you.'

'Hooray! D'you hear, Eustace? Smith hasn't gone.'

'All right, don't make a wow!'

Roger, Mrs. Roger, three maids and Smith all seemed to have gathered from nowhere in particular.

'How are you?' said Mr. Treffry, advancing in front of the children. 'I thought you'd be in a stew. I'm your brother Jolyon's partner—Nicholas Treffry. These young shavers ran out to cool their heads. I've given 'em their dinner and brought 'em back none the worse.'

'H'm!' said Roger profoundly.

'They ought to be birched, no doubt,' continued Mr. Treffry, looking bigger and bigger; 'but I promised they shouldn't be. You,' he added, pointing to Smith, 'the chap who got drunk?'

'Yes, sir.'

'H'm! Let him off this time. Here's your umbrella.'

Roger took the umbrella.

'Well,' he said, 'I don't know what's coming to things.' He held out his hand to Mr. Treffry. 'My brother's always talking about you. He says you'll break your neck one of these days.'

'H'm! He's a careful chap, Jo. Glad you've got 'em back. Good-bye to you, Ma'am. Good-bye, young shavers.'

And, rumbling, Mr. Treffry passed out.

There was a silence.

'Well,' said Roger at last, while a little smile twitched between his whiskers and vanished into them, 'don't let me hear a word more about anything from any of you.' And he withdrew into the dining-room.

Francie rushed at Smith, and mechanically felt his muscle.

‘Dear Smith!’

‘Muvver,’ said Eustace, ‘we had gwouse, pancakes, and spiky artichokes, and we dwove like Jehu.’

So ended the revolt at Roger's, which, together perhaps with the Franco-German war, in that same year laid the foundations of a looser philosophy.

SOAMES AND THE FLAG, 1914-1918

I

ON that day of 1914 when the assassinations at Serajevo startled the world, Soames Forsyte passed in a taxi-cab up the Haymarket, supporting on his knee a picture by James Maris, which he had just bought from Dumetrius. He was pleased at the outcome of a very considerable duel. The fellow had come down to his price at the last minute, and Soames had wondered why.

The reason dawned on him that night in Green Street, while reading his evening paper: 'This tragic occurrence may yet shake Europe to its foundations. Sinister possibilities implicit in such an assassination stagger the imagination.' They must have staggered Dumetrius. The fellow had suddenly seen 'blue.' The market in objects whose 'virtue' varied with the quietude of men's minds and the tourist traffic with America, was—Soames well knew—extremely sensitive. Sinister possibilities! He put the paper down and sat reflecting. No! The chap was an alarmist. What, after all, was an Archduke more or less—they were always getting into

the papers, one way or another. He would see what *The Times* said about it to-morrow, but probably it would turn out a storm in a tea-cup. Soames was not in fact of a European turn of mind. 'Trouble in the Balkans' had become a proverb; and when a thing became a proverb there was nothing in it.

He read *The Times* journeying back with the James Maris to Mapledurham the following day. Editorial hands were lifted in the usual horror at assassination, but there was nothing to prevent him going out fishing.

Indeed, in the month that followed, even after the Austrian ultimatum had appeared, Soames, like ninety-nine per cent. of his fellow-countrymen, didn't know what there was 'to make such a fuss about.' To suppose that England could be involved was weak-minded. The idea, indeed, never seriously occurred to one born just after the Crimean war, and accustomed to look on Europe as fit to be advised, perhaps, but nothing more. Fleur's holidays, too, were just beginning, and he was thinking of buying her a pony: at twelve years old it was time she learned even that rather futile accomplishment—riding. Besides, was there not plenty of fuss in Ireland, if they must have something to fuss about? It was Annette who raised the first bubbles of an immense disquiet. Beautiful creature as she was at that period—'rising thirty-five,' as George Forsythe put it—she did not read the English papers, but

she often had letters from France. On the 28th of July she said to Soames :

‘Soames, there is going to be war—those Germans are crazy mad.’

‘War over a potty little affair like that? Nonsense!’ growled Soames.

‘Oh! you have no imagination, Soames. Of course there will be war, and my poor country will have to fight for Russia; and you English—what will you do?’

‘Do? Why, nothing! If you’re fools enough to go to war, *we* can’t help it.’

‘We expect you to help us,’ said Annette; ‘but you English we never can rely on. You wait always to see which way the cat jump.’

‘What business is it of ours?’ Soames answered testily.

‘You will soon find what business when the Germans take Calais.’

‘I thought you French fancied yourselves invincible.’ But he got up and left the room.

And that evening it was noticed even by Fleur that he took no interest in her. All Saturday and Sunday he was fidgety. On Sunday afternoon came a rumour that Germany had declared war on Russia. Soames put it down to the papers; but he remained awake half the night, and, on reading of its confirmation in *The Times* on Monday morning, went up to Town by the first train. It was Bank holiday, and he sought his City Club as the only spot where he might

possibly get City news. He found that a good many other men were there with the same object, among them one of the partners in the firm of his brokers, Messrs. Green and Greening—more familiarly known as ‘Grin and Grinning.’ To him he detailed his views on the sale of certain stocks. The fellow—it was ‘Grin’—regarded him askance.

‘Nothing doing, Mr. Forsyte,’ he said. ‘The Stock Exchange will be closed some days they say.’

‘Closed?’ said Soames. ‘You don’t mean to say they’d let business stop, even if——’

‘It will *have* to stop, or prices will flop to nothing. As it is, there’s panic enough——’

‘Panic!’ repeated Soames, staring at his broker—‘a sleek beggar!’ ‘Cancel those orders; I shan’t sell anything.’

Not realising that in this he had voiced more than a personal decision, he got up and went to the window. Outside was a regular fluster. Newsvendors were crying: ‘German ultimatum to Belgium!’ Soames stood looking down at the faces in the street. It was not his custom, but he found himself doing it. One and all had a furrow between the eyes. Here was a how-de-do! Down there, on the river, he hadn’t realised. And he had a sudden longing for telegraphic tape.

It was surrounded by men he did not know, and Soames, who had a horror of doing what other people were doing, and especially of waiting

to do it, moved into the smoking-room and sat down. One of the least of club-men, he literally did not know how to get into conversation with strange members, and was confined to listening to what they were saying. This was sufficiently alarming. The three or four within earshot seemed suffering only from fear that 'this damned Government' wouldn't 'come up to the scratch.' Soames' ears stood up more and more. He was hearing more abuse of radicals and the working classes than he had ever heard in so short a space of time. The words 'traitors' and 'politicians' beat through the talk with a sort of rhythm. Though the general trend of the sentiments voiced might be his own, all that was reticent, measured and calculating within him was shocked. What did they think a war would be—a sort of water picnic?

'If we don't go in now,' said one of the group, 'we shall never hold up our heads again.'

Soames sniffed audibly. How? He didn't see. Germany and Austria against France and Russia—if they chose to make such fools of themselves. Europe was always at war in the old days. And now that they had these thundering great armies, it was a wonder they hadn't come to loggerheads long since. What was the use of having no conscription and a big navy, if one wasn't going to keep out of war? Fellows like these! All they thought of was their dividends; and much good that would do them. If England

lost her head now, and went in, there wouldn't *be* any dividends. War, indeed! The whole interior of one, who for all his sixty years had been at peace as a matter of course, rose against that grisly consummation. What had the Russians ever done, or the French for that matter, that they should expect England to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them? As for the Germans—their Kaiser was a 'cock-snoop' of a chap, always rattling his sabre, and talking through his hat—but they were at least more understandable than the Russians or the French; as for Austria—the idea of going to war with her was simply laughable.

'Albert has appealed to the Powers,' said a voice.

Albert! That was the King of Belgium. So he'd appealed, had he? Belgium! Wasn't she guaranteed like Switzerland? The Germans would never be fools enough to—! This was a civilised age—treaties and that! He rose. It was no use listening to jingo chatter. He would go and lunch.

But he could scarcely eat—the weather was so hot. He shouldn't be a bit surprised if that had a lot to do with the state of affairs. Put these Emperors and General chaps on ice, and you'd have them piping small at once. He was drinking a glass of barleywater, when he heard the waiter at the next table say to a member: 'So it says, Sir.'

'Good God!' said the member, starting up.

Soames forgot his manners.

'What does it say?'

'The Germans have invaded Belgium, Sir.'

Soames put down his glass.

'Who told you that?'

'It's on the tape, Sir.'

Soames emitted a sound that might have come from his very boots—so deep it was. He must think. But you couldn't tell what you were thinking in this place.

'My bill,' he said.

When it came, he gave the waiter a shilling against club rules and the habit of a lifetime; for he had an obscure feeling that the fellow had done something unique to him. Then with a sudden homing instinct, he took a cab to Paddington, and all the way in the train read the evening paper, or sat staring out of the carriage window.

He said nothing when he got home—nothing whatever to anybody of what he had heard—the whole of him absorbed in a sort of silent and awful adjustment. That fellow Grey—a steady chap, best of the bunch—must be making his speech to the House by now. What was he saying? And how were they taking it? He got into his punt and sat there listening to the wood-pigeons, in the leafy peace of the bright day. He didn't want a soul near him. England! They said the fleet was ready. His mind didn't

seem able to get further than that. To be on water gave him queer consolation, as if his faith in the fleet would glide with that water down to the sea whereon the pride and the protection of England lay. He put his hand down and the water flowed green-tinged through his opened fingers. By George! There went that kingfisher—hadn't seen him for weeks—flash of blue among the reeds. He wouldn't be that fellow Grey for something. They said he was a fisherman and liked birds. What was he saying to them in there under Big Ben? The chap had always been a gentleman, could he say anything but that England would stand by her word? And for the second time Soames uttered a sound which seemed to travel up from the very tips of his toes. He didn't see what was to be done except agree with that. And what then? All this green peace, every home throughout the land, and stocks and shares—falling, falling! And old Uncle Timothy—ninety-four! He would have to see that they kept it from the old chap. Luckily no newspaper had come into the 'Nook' since Aunt Hester died; reading about the House of Lords in 1910 had so upset Timothy, that he had given up taking even *The Times*.

'And my pictures!' thought Soames. Yes, and Fleur's governess—a German, Fleur having always spoken French with her mother. Annette would want to get rid of her, he wouldn't be surprised. And what would become of her—

nobody would want a German, if there were war. A dragon-fly flew past. Soames watched it with an ache, dumb and resentful, deep within him. A beautiful summer, fine and hot, and they couldn't leave it alone, but must kick up this devil's tattoo, all over the world. This thing might—might come to be anything before it was over. He got up and slowly punted himself across. From there he could see the church. He never went to it, but he supposed it meant something. And now all over Europe they were going to blow each other to bits. What would the parsons say? Nothing—he shouldn't wonder—they were a funny lot. Seven o'clock! It must be over by now in the House of Commons. And he punted himself slowly back. The scent of lime blossom and of meadow-sweet, the scent of sweetbriar and of honeysuckle, yes, and the scent of grass beginning to cool, drifted and clung. He didn't want to leave the water, but it was getting damp.

The mothers of the boys going off to the war out there; young chaps—conscripts—Russia and Austria, Germany and France—and not one knowing or caring a dump about it. A pretty how-de-do! There'd be a lot of volunteering here—if—if—! Only he didn't know, he couldn't tell what use England could be except at sea.

He got out of the punt and walked slowly up past the house to his front gate. Heat was over, light paling, stars peering through, the air smelled

a little of dust. Soames stood like some pelican awaiting it knew not what. A motor-cycle came sputtering from the direction of Reading. The rider, in dusty overalls, flung words at him :

‘Pawlyment ! We’re goin’ in !’ and sputtered past. Soames stretched out a hand. So might a blind man have moved.

Going in ? With little food inside and the stars above him, all the imaginative power, which as a rule he starved, turned active, clutched and groped. Scattered, scuttling images of war came flying across the screen of his consciousness like so many wild geese over the sand, over the sea, out of the darkness into the darkness of a layman’s mind ; a layman who had thought in terms of peace all his days, and his days many. What a thing to happen to one at sixty ! They might have waited till he was like old Timothy. Anxiety ! That was it, anxiety. Kitchener was over from Egypt, they said. That was something. A grim-looking chap, with his eyes fixed beyond you like a lion’s at the Zoo ; but he’d always come through. Soames remembered, suddenly, his sensations during the black week of the Boer war—potty little affair, compared with this. And there was old Roberts—too old, he supposed.

‘But perhaps,’ he thought, ‘we shan’t have to fight on land.’ Besides, who knew ? The Germans might come to their senses yet, when they heard England was going in. There was

Russia, she had more millions than all the rest put together—Steam-roller, they called her ; but had she the steam ? Japan had beaten her.

‘ Well ! ’ and the thought gave him the queerest feeling, proud and miserable : ‘ If we begin, we shall hold on.’ There was something at once terrible to him and deeply satisfying about that instinctive knowledge. They’d be singing ‘ Rule Britannia ’ everywhere to-night—he shouldn’t wonder. People didn’t *think*—a little-headed lot !

The stars burned through a sky growing blue-dark. All over Europe men and guns moving—all over the seas ships tearing along. And this silence—this hush before the storm. That couldn’t last. No ; there they were already—singing back there along the road—drunk, he should say. Tune—words—he didn’t know them—vulgar stuff :

‘ It’s a long, long way to Tipperary,
It’s a long, long way to go . . .
Good-bye, Piccadilly, Farewell, Leicester Square !
It’s a long, long way to Tipperary,
And my heart’s right there ! ’

What had that to do with it—he should like to know ? They were cheering now. Some bean-feast or other had got the news—common people ! But—common or not, to-night all was England, England ! Well, he must go indoors.

2

Silence, as of one stricken by decision, came to instinctively rather than by will, weighed on Soames that night and all next day. He read 'that chap Grey's' speech and, in conspiracy with his country, waited for what he felt would never come: an answer to the ultimatum sent. The Germans had tasted of force, and would never go back on their invasion of Belgium.

In the afternoon he could neither bear his own gloom nor the excitement of Annette, and, walking to the station, he took a train to Town. The streets seemed full and to get fuller every minute. He sat down late, at the Connoisseurs' Club, to dine. When he had finished a meal which seemed to stick in his gizzard, he went downstairs. From his seat in the window he could see St. James' Street, and the people eddying down it towards the centre of the country's life. He sat there practically alone. At eleven—they said—the ultimatum would expire. In this quiet room, where the furniture and wall-decorations had been accumulated for men of taste throughout a century of peace, was the reality of life as he had known it, the reality of Victorian and Edwardian England. The Boer wars, and all those other little wars, Ashanti, Afghan, Soudan, expeditionary adventures, professional affairs far away, had hardly ruffled the minds of Connoisseurs. One had walked and talked upon one's normal way, just

conscious of their disagreeable necessity, and their stimulation at breakfast time, like a pinch of Glauber's salts. But this great thing—why, it had united even the politicians, so he had read in the paper that morning. And there came into his mind Lewis Carroll's rhyme :

‘ And then came down a monstrous crow,
As black as a tar-barrel ;
It frightened both the heroes so
They quite forgot their quarrel.’

He got up and moved, restless, into the hall. All there was of connoisseur in the club was gathered round the tape—some half-dozen members, none of whom he knew. Soames stood a little apart. Somebody turned and spoke to him. A shrinking from his fellows, accentuated in Soames' emotional moments, sent a shiver down his spine. He couldn't stay here and have chaps babbling. Answering curtly, he got his hat and went out. In the crowd he'd be alone, and he moved with it down Pall Mall towards Whitehall. Thicker every moment, it was a curious blend of stillness and excitement. Down Cockspur Street into Whitehall he was slowly swept, till at the mouth of Downing Street the crowd became solidity itself, and there was no moving. Ten minutes to the hour ! Impervious by nature and by training to mob-emotion, Soames yet was emotionalised. Here was something that was not mere mob-sensation—something made up of individual feelings stronger than mere impulse ;

something to which noise was but embroidery. There was plenty of noise, rumorous, and strident now and again, but it didn't seem to belong to the faces—didn't seem to suit them any more than it suited the stars that winked and waited. All sorts and conditions of men and women, and he cheek by jowl with them—like sardines in a box—and he didn't mind. Civilians, they were, peaceful folk—not a soldier or a sailor in the lot! They had begun to sing 'God save the King!' His own lips moved; he could not hear himself, and that consoled him. He fixed his eyes on Big Ben. The hands of the bright clock, halfway to the stars, crept with incredible slowness. Two minutes more and the thing would begin—the Thing! What would come of it? He couldn't tell, he didn't know. A bad business, a mad business—once in, you couldn't get out—you had to hold on—to the death—to the death! The faces were all turned one way now under the street lights, white faces, from whose open mouths still came that song; and then—Boom! The clock had struck, and cheering rose. Queer thing to cheer for! 'Hooraa-a-ay!' *The Thing* had started!...

Soames walked away. Had he cheered? He did not seem to know. A little ashamed he walked. Why couldn't he have waited down there on the river, instead of rushing up into the crowd like one of these young clerks or shop fellows? He was glad nobody would know where he had been. As if it did any good for him to get excited; as

if it did any good for him to do or get anything at his age. Sixty ! He was glad he hadn't got a son. Bad enough to have three nephews. Still, Val was in South Africa and his leg wasn't sound ; but Winifred's second son, Benedict—what age was he—thirty ? Then there was Cicely's boy—just gone up to Cambridge. All these boys ! Some of them would be rushing off to get themselves killed. A bad sad business ! And all because— ! Exactly ! Because of what ?

Walking in a sort of trance he had reached the Ritz. All was fiz-gig in the streets. Waiters stood on the pavement. Ladies of the night talked together excitedly or spoke to policemen as though they had lost their profession. Soames went on down Berkeley Square through quieter streets to his sister's house. Winifred was waiting up for him, still in that half mourning for Montague Dartie, which Soames considered superfluous. As trustee, he had been compelled to learn the true history of that French staircase, if only to keep it from the rest of the world.

'They tell me war's declared, Soames. Such a relief !'

'Relief ! Pretty relief !'

'You know what I mean, dear boy. One never knows what those Radicals might have done.'

'This'll cost a thousand millions,' said Soames, 'before it's over. Over ? I don't know when it'll be over—the Germans are no joke.'

'But surely, Soames, with Russia and ourselves. And they say the French are so good now.'

'They'd say anything,' said Soames.

'But you're glad, aren't you?'

'Glad we haven't ratted, yes. But it's ruination all round. Where's your boy Benedict?'

Winifred looked up sharply.

'Oh!' she said. 'But he's not even a volunteer.'

'He will be,' said Soames, gloomily.

'Do you really think it's as serious as that, Soames?'

'Serious as hell,' answered Soames; 'you mark my words.'

Winifred was silent for some minutes; on her face, so fashionably composed, was a look as though someone had half drawn up its blind. She said in a small voice:

'I'm thankful dear Val has got his leg. You don't think we shall be invaded, Soames?'

'Not if they keep their heads. All depends on the fleet. They say there's a chap called Jellicoe, but you never know. There are these Zeppelins, too—I shall send Fleur down to school in the west somewhere.'

'Ought one to lay in provisions?'

'If everyone does that, there'll be a shortage, and that won't do. The less fuss the better. I shall go down home by the first train. Going to bed, now. Good-night.' He kissed the fore-

head of a face where the blind was still half drawn down.

He slept well, and was back at Mapledurham before noon. Fleur's greeting, and the bright peace of the river, soothed him, so that he lunched with a certain appetite. On the verandah afterwards, his head gardener came up.

'They're puttin' off the 'orticultural show this afternoon, Sir. Looks as if the Germans had bitten off more than they can chew, don't you think, Sir?'

'Can't tell,' said Soames. Everybody seemed to think it was going to be a picnic, and this annoyed him.

'It's lucky Lord Kitchener's over here,' said the gardener, 'he'll show them.'

'This may last a year and more,' said Soames; 'no waste of any sort, d'you understand me?'

The gardener looked surprised.

'I thought——'

'Think what you like, but don't waste anything, and grow vegetables. See?'

'Yes, Sir. So you think it's serious, Sir?'

'I do,' said Soames.

'Yes, Sir.' The gardener moved away; a narrow-headed chap! That was the trouble; hearts were in the right place, but heads were narrow. They said those Germans had big round heads and no backs to them. So they had, if he remembered. He went in and took up *The Times*. To read the papers seemed the only thing one

could do. While he was sitting there Annette came in. She was flushed and had a ball of wool in her hand.

‘Well,’ he said, over the top of the paper, ‘are you satisfied now?’

She came across to him.

‘Put your paper down, Soames, and let me kiss you.’

‘What for?’ said Soames.

Annette removed *The Times* and sank on his knees. Placing her hands on his shoulders she bent and kissed him.

‘Because you have not deserted my country. I am proud of England.’

‘That’s new,’ said Soames. She was a weight, and smelled of verbena; ‘I don’t know what we can do,’ he added, ‘except at sea.’

‘Oh! it is everything. We have not our backs on the wall any more; we have our backs on you.’

‘You certainly have,’ said Soames; not that it was unpleasant.

Annette rose. She stood, slightly transfigured.

‘We shall beat those ’orrible Germans now. Soames, we cannot keep Fräulein, she must go.’

‘I thought that was coming. Why? It’s not her fault.’

‘To have a German in the house? No!’

‘Why not? She’s harmless. If you send her away, what’ll she do?’

'What she likes, but not in this house. Who knows if she is a spy?'

'Stuff and nonsense!'

'Oh! you English are so slow—you wait always till the fat is in the fire, as you say.'

'I don't see any good in hysteria,' muttered Soames.

'They will talk in the neighbourhood.'

'Let them!'

'*Non!* I have told her she must go. After the holiday Fleur must go to school. It is no use, Soames, I am not going to keep a German. "*A la guerre comme à la guerre!*"'

Soames uttered a sound of profound disapproval. There she went on her high horse! Something deeply just within him was offended, but something sagacious knew that if he opposed her, the situation would become impossible.

'Send her to me, then,' he said.

'Do not be sloppee with her,' said Annette, and went away.

Sloppy! The word outraged him. He was Sloppy! still brooding over it, when he became conscious that the German governess was in the room.

She was a tall young woman, with a rather high-cheekboned, high-coloured face, and candid grey eyes, and she stood without speaking, her hands folded one over the other.

'This is a bad business, *Fräulein*.'

'Yes, Mr. Forsyte; Madame says I am to go.'

Soames nodded. 'The French have very strong feelings. Have you made any arrangements?'

The young woman shook her head. Soames received an impression of desolation from the gesture.

'What arrangements could I make? No one will want me, I suppose. I wish I had gone back to Germany a week ago. Will they let me now?'

'Why not? This isn't a seaside place. You'd better go up and see the authorities. I'll give you a letter to say you've been quietly down here.'

'Thank you, Mr. Forsyte. That is kind.'

'I don't want you to go,' said Soames. 'It's all nonsense; but one can't control these things'; and, seeing two tears glistening on her cheekbones, he added hastily: 'Fleur'll miss you. Have you got money?'

'Very little. I send my salary to my old parents.'

There it was! Old parents, young children, invalids, and all the rest of it. The pinch! And here he was administering it! A personable young woman, too! Nothing against her except the war! 'If I were you,' he said slowly, 'I shouldn't waste time. I'd go up before they know where they are. There'll be a lot of hysteria. Wait a minute, I'll give you money.'

He went to the old walnut bureau, which he had picked up in Reading—a fine piece with a secret drawer, and a bargain at that. He didn't know what to give her—the whole thing was so

uncertain. Though she stood there so quietly, he was conscious that her tears were in motion.

‘Damn it!’ he said, softly, ‘I shall give you a term’s salary and fifteen pounds in cash for your journey. If they won’t let you go, let me know when you come to the end of it.’

The young woman raised her clasped hands.

‘I don’t want to take money, Mr. Forsyte.’

‘Nonsense,’ said Soames; ‘you’ll take what I give you. It’s all against my wish. You ought to be staying, in my opinion. What’s it to do with women?’

He took from the secret drawer an adequate number of notes and went towards her.

‘I’ll send you to the station. Go up and see the authorities this very afternoon; and while you get ready I’ll write that letter.’

The young woman bent and kissed his hand. Such a thing had never happened to him before, and he didn’t know that he ever wanted it to happen again.

‘There, there!’ he said, and turning back to the bureau, wrote:

‘SIR,—

‘The bearer of this, Fräulein Schulz, has been governess to my daughter for the last eighteen months. I can testify to her character and attainments. She has lived quietly at my house at Mapledurham all the time with the exception of one or two holidays spent, I believe,

in Wales. Fräulein Schulz wishes to return to Germany, and I trust you will afford her every facility. I enclose my card, and am, Sir,

‘Faithfully yours,
‘SOAMES FORSYTE.’

He then telephoned for a car, having refused so far to have one of his own—tearing great things, always getting out of order.

When the machine arrived, he went out into the hall to wait for the young woman to come down. Fleur and a little friend had gone off to some wood or other; Annette was in the garden and would stay there, he shouldn’t wonder; he didn’t want the young woman to go off without a hand to shake.

First they brought down a shiny foreign trunk, then a handbag, and a little roll with an umbrella stuck through it. The young woman came last. Her eyes were red. The whole thing suddenly seemed to Soames extraordinarily barbarous. To be thrown out at a moment’s notice like this because her confounded Kaiser’s military cut-throats had lost their senses! It wasn’t English!

‘Here’s the letter. You’d better stay at that hotel near Victoria until you go. Good-bye, then; I’m very sorry, but you’ll be more comfortable at home while the war’s on.’

He shook her gloved hand, and perceiving that his own was again in danger, withdrew it hastily.

'Give Fleur a kiss for me, please, Sir.'

'I will. She'll be sorry to have missed you. Well, good-bye!' He was terrified that she would begin crying again, or attempt to thank him, and he added hastily: 'You'll have a nice drive.' As a fact he doubted it, for in fancy he could see her oozing into her handkerchief all the way.

The luggage was in now, and so was she. The car was making the usual noises. Soames, in the doorway, lifted his hand, twiddling it towards her turned red face.

Her lip was drooping, she wore a scared expression. He gave her a wan smile, and turned back into the house. Too bad!

3

Rumours! Soames would never have believed that people could be such fools. Rumours of naval engagements, rumours of spies, rumours of Russians. Take, for instance, his meeting with the village schoolmistress outside the school.

'Have you heard the terrible news, Mr. Forsyte?'

Soames' hair stood up under his hat.

'No; what's that?'

'Oh! there's been a dreadful battle at sea. We've lost six battleships. Isn't it awful?'

Soames' fists clenched themselves in his pockets.

‘Who told you that?’

‘It’s all over the village. Six ships—isn’t it terrible?’

‘What did the Germans lose?’

‘Twelve!’

Soames almost jumped.

‘Twelve! Then the war’s over. What do you mean—terrible—why, it’s the best news we could have!’

‘Oh! but six of our own ships—it’s awful!’

‘War is awful,’ said Soames. ‘But if this is true——’ He left her abruptly and made for the Post Office. It was not true, of course. Nothing was true. Not even his own suspicions. Take, for instance, those two square-shouldered men in straw hats whom he met walking down a lane with their feet at right angles, as Englishmen never walked. Germans, and spies into the bargain, or he was a Dutchman; especially as his telephone went out of order that very afternoon. And of course they turned out to be two Americans staying at Pangbourne on a holiday, and the wire had been affected by a thunderstorm. But what were you to think, when the newspapers were full of spy stories, and the very lightning was apparently in the German secret service? As to mirrors in daylight and matches after dark, they were in obvious communication with the German fleet in the Kiel Canal, or wherever it was. Time and again Soames would say:

‘Bunkum! The whole thing’s weak-minded!’

Only to feel himself weak-minded the next moment. Look at those two hundred thousand Russians whom everybody was seeing in trains all over the country. They turned out to be eggs, and probably addled at that; but how could you help believing in them, especially when you wanted to! And then the authorities told you nothing; dumb as oysters; as if that were the way to treat an Englishman—it only made him fancy things. And there was Mons. They couldn't even let you know about the army, except that it was heroic, and had killed a lot of Germans, and was marching backwards in order to put the finishing touch to them. That was about all one heard, till suddenly one found it was touch and go whether Paris could be saved, and the French Government had packed their traps and gone off to Bordeaux. And all the time nothing to do but read the papers, which he couldn't believe, and listen to the click of Annette's needles. And then came the news of the battle of the Marne, and he could breathe again.

He breathed freely—he had gone weeks, it seemed to him, without taking a deep breath. People were saying it was the beginning of the end, and the Allies—he himself had always called it Allies—and why not?—would soon be in Germany now. He wanted to believe this so much, that he said he didn't believe a word of it, much as when, the weather looking fine, he would take his umbrella to make sure. And then,

forsooth, they went and dug themselves in ! This beginning of warfare which was to last four years, produced but moderate premonition in his mind. There was a certain relief in the immobility of things after the plunging excitement of Mons and the Marne. He continued to read the papers, shake his head, and invest in War Loan. His nephew Benedict was training for a commission in Kitchener's army ; Cicely's boy, also, had joined up, as they called it. He supposed they had to. Annette had said several times that she wanted to go to France and be a nurse. It was all her fancy. She could do much more good by knitting and being economical.

Presently he took Fleur down to her school in the West ; and not much too early, for the Zeppelins became busy soon after. In regard to their exploits, he displayed a somewhat natural perversity, for though he had taken his daughter down to a remote region to avoid them, he thought people made much too much fuss about them altogether. From a top window in his Club he was privileged to see one of them burst into flames. He said nothing and was glad of it afterwards—some of his fellow-members had shown their feelings, and those not all they should be. There was provocation, no doubt ; but, after all, the crew were being burned alive. Generally speaking, while the war dragged on, the reality of it was kept from him most efficiently not only by the Government, the papers, and his

In these ways, then, nearly two years passed before in his paper that June morning he read the first official account of the battle of Jutland. Taking the journal in his hand so that no one else should see it till he himself had recovered, he passed out of the drawing-room window on to the dewy lawn, and walked blindly towards the river. There was a sinking sensation in the pit of his stomach. Standing there bareheaded in the sunshine and the peace of leaves and water, with birds all round as if nothing had happened, he tried to get hold of himself. Almost a sense of panic he had. A real battle at last, and all those losses ! Under a poplar tree he read the account again. The sting was in the head of it ; the tail was all right ! Why couldn't they have reversed the order and begun with the fact that the Germans had run for home ? What had possessed them to make him feel so bad ? It was a victory even if we *had* lost all those ships. A blundering lot—making the worst of it like that ! It was like being shot by your own side. Tell the truth—yes ; but not so as to give you a stomach-ache, where there was no need for it. He went back to breakfast with his jaw set.

'There's been a big battle at sea,' he said to Annette ; 'we lost a lot of ships, but the Germans cut and ran for it. I shouldn't be surprised if they never come out again.' Thus out of instinctive perversity did he foretell the future.

The rest of the day and the day after, further

reports confirmed his resentment with the authorities for making him suffer like that. What on earth had they been about ! They kept all sorts of things from you, and then when they had what really amounted to good news, blurted it out as if it were a disaster.

The death of Kitchener a few days later, though lowering to his temperature, had not the same staggering effect. He had done a lot for the country, and looked like a lion in a Zoo, but in the ebb and flow of world events even his great figure seemed small.

Towards the end of 1916 he had a curious little personal experience which affected him more than he would have admitted, so that he never mentioned it. This was in the train going up to London. From patriotic motives he was at that time travelling third, but on this particular morning, the train being full, he got into a first-class compartment, occupied by a young officer in uniform with his military kit in the rack above, and a pretty young woman whose eyes were red. From behind his paper Soames felt that if they were not married, they ought to be, for they were mutually occupied with each other's eyes and hands and lips. At stations where their occupation had to cease he observed them round his nose. The pallid desperation of the young man's face and the look in the girl's reddened eyes gave him definite discomfort. Here was a case of impending separation, with all the tragic foreboding, and

utter grief of war-time partings such as were taking place millionfold all over the world. It was the first Soames had seen, close up, and far more painful than he had realised. They were locked in a desperate embrace when the train ran in to Westbourne Park. The girl was evidently to get out here, and seemed incapable of doing so. She stood swaying with the tears running down her face. The young officer wrenched the door open and almost pushed her out. Her face, looking up from the platform, was so intensely wretched that it made Soames sore. The train moved on, the young officer flung himself back into his corner with a groan. Soames looked out of the opposite window. For a whole minute even after the train had reached Paddington, he continued to gaze in at a deserted carriage alongside. At last, grasping his umbrella, he evacuated the now empty compartment and getting into a taxi, uttered the word 'Poultry' in a gruff voice. He was gruff all day. All over the world it was like that—a shocking business! And yet, by now, people seemed more concerned about their sugar and butter rations than about the war itself. Air-raids, ships being sunk, and what they could get to eat, were all people thought about—except, of course, dancing in night clubs and making up their faces. In all his life he had never seen so many made-up faces as he saw now. In coming from the office late and passing down the Strand, every woman he met seemed like the street women he used to see

in his younger days. Paint and powder, with khaki alongside !

And so 1917 went by, and Fleur was getting a big girl. He had good reports of her—she was quick at lessons and games ; it was some comfort. At her school down in the West, he gathered, they heard and saw very little of the war ; and in the holidays he kept her at home as much as he could. There were few signs of war at Mapledurham, though of course khaki was everywhere. When conscription came in, Soames had shaken his head. He didn't know what the newspapers were about. The thing was un-English. Once it was introduced, however, he supposed it was the only thing. All the same, he never approved of the way they bullied those conscientious objectors. He had no sympathy with the fellows' consciences, of course, but the idea of harassing your fellow-countrymen at a time like this, repelled him ; all his native individualism, too, remained in secret revolt against the slave-driving which had become the everyday procedure of abominable times. He had lost two gardeners in the opening year, and now they took the other two and left him with an old man and a boy, so that he often took a spud and dug up weeds himself, while Annette killed slugs with a French mixture. In the house he had never had anything but maids, so that they couldn't take the butler he hadn't got, which was some consolation. But if he'd had a car, they'd have taken his chauffeur. He felt he could have

lost the lot with composure, if they'd gone of their own free will, but he would not have urged their going. Some reticent, secret belief in the sanctity of private feelings, even feelings about the country, would have prevented him. They had a right, he supposed, to their own ideas about things. If he, himself, had been under forty, he supposed he would have gone—though the mere notion gave him a pain below the ribs, so crude, so brutal, and so empty did all this military business appear to him ; but he was not prepared to tell anybody else to go. His retention of this kind of delicacy made him lonelier than ever in the City, in the Club, and in trains, where most people seemed prepared to tell anybody to do anything. Soames himself was almost ashamed of his delicacy ; you couldn't carry on a war without ordering people about. And he tried to conduct himself so that people shouldn't suspect him of this weakness. But on one occasion it led him into a serious tiff with his cousin George Forsyte at the 'Iseeum' Club. George, just a year younger than himself, had, it appeared, gone in for recruiting down in Hampshire ; while spending the week-ends in town 'to enjoy the air-raids,' as he put it. Soames suspected him of enjoying something else, besides. Catching sight of George, then, one Saturday afternoon, sitting in the bow window of the 'Iseeum,' Soames had inadvertently returned his greeting and was beckoned up.

‘Have a drink?’ said George. ‘No? Some tea, then; you can have my sugar.’

His japing, heavy-lidded eyes took Soames in from top to toe.

‘You’re thin as a lath,’ he said. ‘What are you doing—breeding for the country?’

Soames drew up the corner of his lip.

‘That’s not funny,’ he said tartly. ‘What are you doing?’

‘Getting chaps killed. You’d better take to it, too. The blighters want driving, now.’

‘Thank you,’ said Soames; ‘not in my line.’

George grinned.

‘Too squeamish?’

‘If you like.’

‘What’s your general game, then?’

‘Minding my own business,’ said Soames.

‘Making the wills, eh?’

Soames put his cup down, and took his hat up. He had never disliked George more than at that moment.

‘Don’t get your shirt out,’ said George; ‘somebody must make the wills. You might make mine, by the way—equal shares to Roger, Eustace and Francie. Executors yourself and Eustace. Come and do an air-raid with me one night. Did you see St. John Hayman’s boy was killed? They say the Huns are preparing a big push for the spring.’

Soames shrugged.

'Good-bye,' he said ; ' I'll send you a draft of your will.'

'Pitch it short,' said George, ' and have me roasted. No bones by request.'

Soames nodded, and went out.

A big push ! Would they never tire of making mincemeat of the world ? He had often been tempted towards the Lansdowne attitude ; but some essential bulldog within him had always stirred and growled. An end that was no end—after all this, it wouldn't do ! Hold on—until ! For never, even at the worst moments, had he believed that England could be beaten.

In March 1918 he had been laid up at Mapledurham with a chill and was only just out again, when the big German 'push' began. It came with a suddenness that shook him to the marrow, and induced the usual longing to get away somewhere by himself. He went up rather slowly on to a bit of commonland, and sat down on his overcoat among gorse bushes. It was peaceful and smelled of spring ; a lark was singing. And out there the Germans were breaking through ! A sort of prayer went up from him while he sat in the utter peace of the mild day. He had heard so many times that we were ready for it ; and now we weren't, it seemed. Always the way ! Too cocksure ! He sat listening, as if—as if one could hear the guns all that way off. The man down at the lock was reported to have heard them once. All me eye ! You couldn't ! Couldn't

you? Wasn't that——? Nonsense! He lay back and put his ear to the ground, but only the whisper of a very gentle wind came to him, and the hum of a wild bee wending to some blossom of the gorse. A better sound than that of guns. And then the first chime of the village church bell tingled his ears. There they would soon be sitting and kneeling and thinking about the break-through, and the parson would offer up a special prayer for the destruction of Germans—he shouldn't wonder. Well, it was destroy or be destroyed—it all came back to that. Funny thing, life—living on life, or rather on death! According to the latest information, all matter was alive, and every shape lived on some other shape, or at least on the elements of shape. The earth was nothing but disintegrated shape, out of which came more shapes and you ate them, and then you disintegrated and gave rise to shapes, and somebody ate them, and so it went on. In spite of the break-through, he could not help being glad to be alive after a fortnight cooped up in the house. His sense of smell, too, so long confined to eau-de-Cologne, was very keen this morning; he could smell the gorse—a scent more delicate than most, 'the scent of gorse far-blown from distant hill,' he'd read somewhere. And to think that out there his countrymen were struggling and dying and being blown to smithereens—young fellows, from his office, from his garden, from every English office and garden to save England—to

save the world, they said—but that was flim-flam ! And, perhaps, after all these horrible four years they wouldn't save England ! Drawing his thin legs under him, he sat staring down towards the river where his home lay. Yes, they would save her, if it meant putting another ten years on to the conscription age, or taking the age limit off altogether. England under a foreigner ? Not for Joe ! He scrabbled with his hand, brought up a fistful of earth, and mechanically put it to his nose. It smelled exactly as it should smell—of earth, and gave him ever so queer and special a sensation. English earth ! H'm ! Earth was earth, whether in England or in Timbuctoo ! Funny to give your life for what smelled exactly like his mushroom house. You put a name to a thing and you died for it ! There was a lark singing—very English bird, cheery and absent-minded, singing away without knowing a thing about anything and caring less, he supposed. The bell had ceased to toll for service. If people thought God was particularly interested in England, they were mistaken. He wouldn't do a thing about it ! People had to do things for themselves, and if they didn't, that was the end. Take those submarines. Leave them to God and see what happened—one would be eating one's fantails before one could say Jack Robinson !

The mild air and a slant of March sunlight gently warmed his cheek pale from too much contact with a pillow. And—out there ! If ever

this thing ended, he would come up here again and see what it was like without an ache under his fifth rib. A nice spot—open and high. And now he would have to get back to the house and they would give him chicken broth, and he would have to listen to Annette saying that the English never saw an inch before their noses—which as a matter of fact they didn't—and tell her that they did. A weary business when you felt as he felt about this news. He rose. Twelve o'clock ! They'd have finished praying now and got to the sermon. He pitied that parson—preaching about the Philistines, he shouldn't wonder ! There were the jawbones of asses about, plenty, but not a Samson among the lot of them. The gorse—it was early—looked pretty blooming round him—when the gorse was out of bloom, kissing was out of fashion. He wondered idly what had to go out of bloom before killing was out of fashion. There was a hawk ! He stood and watched it hover and swoop sideways, and the red glint of it, till again it rested hovering on the air ; then slowly in the pale sunlight he wended his way down towards the river.

4

July came. The break-through had long been checked, the fronts repaired, the Americans had come over in great numbers, Foch was in supreme command. Soames didn't know—perhaps it was

necessary, but Annette's undisguised relief was unpleasant to him, and so far as he could see, things were going on as interminably as before. It was to Winifred that he spoke the words which definitely changed the fortunes of the world.

'We shall never win,' he said, 'I despair of it. The men are all right, but leaders! There isn't one among the lot—I despair of it.' No one had ever heard him talk like that before, or use such a final word. The morning papers on the following day were buoyant with the news that the German offensive against the French had been stopped and that the French and Americans had broken through. From that day on the Allies, as Soames still called them, never looked back.

Those interested in such questions will pause, perhaps to consider whether Soames—like so many other people—really won the war, or whether it was that in him some hidden sensibility received in advance of the newspapers the impact of events and put up the instantaneous contradiction natural from one so individualistic. Whichever is true, the relief he felt at having his dictum contradicted was extraordinary. For the first time in three years he spent the following Sunday afternoon in his picture gallery. The French were advancing, the English were waiting to advance; the Americans were doing well; the air-raids had ceased; the submarines were beaten. And it all seemed to have happened in two days. While he stood looking at his Goya and turning over photo-

graphs of pictures in the Prado, a notion came to him. In that painting of Goya's called 'La Vendimia,' the girl with the basket on her head reminded him of Fleur. There was really quite a resemblance. If the war ever stopped, he would commission an artist to make him a copy of that Goya girl—the colouring, if he remembered rightly, was very agreeable. It would remind him of pleasant things—his daughter and his visit to the Prado before he bought Lord Burlingford's 'Goya' in 1910. A notion so utterly unconnected with the war had not occurred to him for years—it was almost like a blessing, with its suggestion of life apart from battle and murder, and once more connected with Dumetrius. And ringing the bell, he ordered a jug of claret cup. He drank very little of it, but it gave him a feeling that was almost Victorian. What had that fellow Jolyon, and Irene, done with themselves all these war years? Had they sweated in their shoes and lost weight as he had done—he hoped so! Their boy, if he remembered, would be of military age next year; for the thousandth time he was glad that Fleur had disappointed him and been a girl. That day was, on the whole, the happiest he had spent since he bought his James Maris in July 1914 . . .

He began now to put on weight slowly, for though the battles went on, anxious and bloody, the movement was always in the right direction, of which he had despaired just in time. The

enemy was caving-in ; the Bulgarians, the Turks, soon the Austrians would go—they said. And all the time the Americans were swarming over. Soames met their officers in London on his way to and from the City. They wore khaki with high collars and sometimes pince-nez—they must feel very uncomfortable ; but they seemed in good spirits and had everything money could buy—which was the great thing. He often thought what he would do when the end came. Some men would get drunk, he supposed ; others would lose their heads and probably their hats ; but so far as he could see, there didn't seem to be any adequate way of expressing what he himself would feel. He thought of Brighton, and of fishing in a punt ; he thought of taking train down to Fleur's school and taking train back ; he thought of standing in a crowd opposite Downing Street, as he had stood when the thing began. Nothing seemed satisfactory. Then the Austrians gave up. Somehow he had never thought that he had actually been at war with the Austrians—they were an amiable lot, with too many archdukes. And now that they were down and out, and the archdukes done with, he felt quite sorry for them. People were saying it had become a question of days. Soames didn't know. The Germans always seemed to have something up their sleeves. They had been marvellous fighters—no good saying they hadn't—in fact, they had fought too well altogether.

He shouldn't be surprised if they tried to destroy London at the last minute. And with unconscious perversity he took up his quarters with Winifred in Green Street. On the ninth of November he had his sixty-fourth birthday there—fortunately no one remembered it; he never could bear receiving presents and being wished many happy returns, such nonsense! Everybody was sure now that it was all over bar the shouting. Soames, however, said: 'You mark my words—they'll try a big air-raid before they finish.' Terms for an Armistice were being prepared: it was rumoured that they would be signed at any moment. Soames shook his head. He was sufficiently in two minds, however, not to go to the City on November 11th, and was seated in the dining-room at Green Street, when there came the sound of maroons which always preluded an air-raid. What had he told them? It would be a quarter-of-an-hour or more before the raid began. He would put his nose out, and see what they were up to. The street was empty but for an old woman—charlady she seemed to be—standing with a duster in her hand on the doorstep of the next house. Soames was struck by her face. It wore a smile such as a poet might have called ecstatic. She waved her duster at him, and then—most peculiar—began to wipe her eyes with it. Sound rolled into the street from Park Lane—cheering, gusts of it, waves of cheering. Soames saw other people

rushing out of houses. One of them threw his hat down and danced on it. It couldn't be an air-raid then—no man would do that for an air-raid. Why? Why—of course—it was the Armistice! *At last!* And very quietly, trembling all over, Soames muttered: 'Thank God!' For a moment he was tempted to hurry down towards Park Lane whence the sound of cheering came. Then, suddenly, the idea seemed to him vulgar. He walked back into the house and slammed the door. Going into the dining-room, he sat down in an armchair which had its back to everything. He sat there without movement except that he breathed as if he had been running. His lips kept quivering. It was queer. And then—he never admitted it to a soul—tears ran out of his eyes and rolled on to his stiff collar. He would not have believed them possible and he let them roll. The long, long Thing—it was over. All over! Then suddenly, feeling that if he didn't take care he would have to change his collar, he took out his pocket handkerchief. This confession of his emotion acted like a charm. The moisture ceased, and removing all trace of it, he leaned back with eyes closed. For some time he stayed like that, as if at the end of a long day's work. The clamour of bells and rejoicing penetrated the closed room, but Soames sat with his head sunk on his chest, still quivering all over. It was as if age-long repression of his feelings were taking revenge in this long, relaxed, quiver-

ing immobility. Out there, they would be dancing and shouting ; laughing and drinking ; praying and weeping. And Soames sat and quivered.

He got up at last and going to the sideboard, helped himself to a glass of his dead father's old brown sherry. Then taking his overcoat and umbrella, he went out—he didn't know why, or whither on earth.

He walked through quiet streets towards Piccadilly. When he passed people they smiled at him, and he didn't like it—having to smile back. Some seemed to toss remarks at the air as they passed—talking to themselves, or to God, or what not. Every now and then somebody ran. He reached Piccadilly, and didn't like it either—full of lorries and omnibuses crowded with people all cheering and behaving like fools. He crossed it, as quickly as possible, and went down through the Green Park, past the crowds in front of Buckingham Palace. He walked on to the Abbey and the Houses of Parliament—crowds there—crowds everywhere ! He skirted them and kept on along the Embankment—he didn't know why and he didn't know where. From Blackfriars he moved up Citywards and reached Ludgate Hill. And suddenly he knew where he was going—St. Paul's ! There stood the dome, curved massive against the grey November sky, huge above the stir of flags and traffic, silent in the din of cheering and of bells. He walked up

the steps and went in. He hadn't been since the war began, and his visit now had no connection with God. He went because it was big and old and empty, and English, and because it reminded him. He walked up the aisle and stood looking at the roof of the dome. Christopher Wren! Good old English name! Good old quiet English stones and bones! No more sudden death, no more bombs, no more drowning ships, no more poor young devils taken from home and killed! Peace! He stood with his hands folded on the handle of his umbrella and his left knee flexed as if standing at ease; on his restrained pale face upturned was a look wistful and sardonic. Rivers of blood and tears! Why? A gleam of colour caught his eye. Flags! They couldn't do without them even here! The Flag! Terrible thing—sublime and terrible—the Flag!

NOTES

THE MAN WHO KEPT HIS FORM

- P. 1. ALICE'S FLAMINGO-CROQUET-MALLET. In Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* Alice plays croquet at the Red Queen's party and finds that the mallets are flamingoes and the balls hedgehogs, with the inconvenient tricks of acting as the passage here shows.
- P. 2. 'TAILS.' Long-tailed coats worn only by seniors—i.e. from modern remove upwards—at Harrow School.
- P. 2. FAGGING. Menial work done by junior boys for seniors at certain English public schools.
- P. 3. 'SQUINT.' School slang for a look.
- P. 4. 'SIDE.' School slang for conceited behaviour.
- P. 4. 'TRIALS.' Races between test-crews or matches between test-teams at the chief public schools and Oxford and Cambridge, for the purpose of selecting the final eight or team to represent the school or university.
- P. 4. CUT A GREATER DASH. I.e. made a more impressive appearance.
- P. 4. 'TORPID' ELEVEN. 'Torpids' at Harrow are boys who have not been more than two years at the school. From them a football eleven is chosen in each house.
- P. 5. 'Fronde.' Rebellious plotting, from the rebellion of the party called La Fronde in France in the middle of the seventeenth century.
- P. 5. TO RAT. School slang for to shirk a responsibility.
- P. 15. KITCHENER'S ARMY. The first 100,000 volunteers from Britain for the World War, so called because recruited under the special scheme—'for three years or the duration of the war'—launched by Lord Kitchener, then Minister of War, in 1914.

A PORTRAIT

- P. 24. A THREAD-PAPER. A person of slender figure; originally, a strip of paper, thin and soft, folded to form a long and narrow strip.
- P. 24. DAYS OF PICKWICK. The 1830's. Dickens' *Pickwick Papers* was published in 1836.
- P. 26. MOZART (1756-1792). BEETHOVEN (1770-1827). GLUCK (1714-1787). MEYERBEER (1791-1863). All famous German musical composers.
- P. 26. WAGNER (1813-1883). The great German operatic composer. At Bayreuth, in Bavaria, is his house with his grave in the garden. The Wagner Theatre was there opened in 1876, exclusively for the presentation of his operas.
- P. 27. RAFAEL (1483-1520). CORREGGIO (1494-1534). TITIAN (1477-1576). TINTORETTO (1518-1594). All Italian master-painters.
- P. 27. REYNOLDS (1723-1792). ROMNEY (1734-1802). HOGARTH (1697-1764). English master-painters.
- P. 27. RUBENS (1597-1640). VANDYKE (1599-1641). REMBRANDT (1606-1669). The first two were Flemish, the last Dutch; all master-painters.
- P. 27. TURNER (1775-1851). The great English landscape painter, whose later manner astonished and confused the amateurs of classical art, among whom is evidently the character here depicted.
- P. 27. IMPRESSIONISM. The name of a style of painting, developing in the middle of the nineteenth century, which represented rather the artist's feeling for and interpretation of an object than the form itself. WHISTLER (1824-1903), American born but long resident in England, was a peculiarly combative leader of this movement.
- P. 29. TURGENEV (1818-1883). Great Russian novelist.
- P. 29. TROLLOPE (1815-1883). MARRYAT (1792-1848). BLACKMORE (1825-1900). HARDY (1840-1928). English novelists, the first of the 'Barsetshire' series, the second of *Mr. Midshipman Easy* and other sea stories, the third of *Lorna Doone*, and the fourth of tales of the West Country, notably *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*.

- P. 29. MARK TWAIN. Pen-name for Samuel Clemens, humorous and satirical writer of the United States, famous for *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Innocents Abroad*, *A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur*, and many other books.
- P. 29. MEREDITH (1828-1909). English novelist and poet, author of the *Ordeal of Richard Feverel* and other books, whose peculiar foreshortened style and psychological bent make him unattractive to some.
- P. 29. EDMUND (1787-1823) and CHARLES KEAN (Edmund's son) (1811-1868). CHARLIE MATHEWS (either the father, 1776-1835, or more probably the son, 1803-1878). FARREN (1786-1861). POWER (1797-1841). ROBSON (1836-1903). HELEN FAUCIT (1817-1898). Famous actors and an actress of the nineteenth century. Power was Irish, Robson American.
- P. 29. TAGLIONI (1804-1884). Italian ballet-dancer.
- P. 29. IRVING (1838-1905). Principal English tragic actor of the nineteenth century.
- P. 29. *Louis XI*, by Casimir Delavigne. *The Bells*, a version of Erckmann Chatrian's *Le Juif Polonais*, by Leopold Lewis, played in 1871 for a run of 150 nights with Irving as Matthias. *Charles I*, by W. G. Wells.
- P. 31. 'DIZZY' (1804-1881). Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield, famous Conservative leader and Prime Minister.
- P. 31. DIZZY'S RIVAL. W. E. Gladstone (1809-1898), equally famous Liberal leader and Prime Minister.
- P. 31. JOHN BRIGHT (1811-1889). Leader of the Anti-Corn Law Movement of the 'forties, together with Richard Cobden. PALMERSTON (1784-1865), the famous and outspoken Foreign Minister of 1830-1841 and 1846-1851; he was Prime Minister 1855-1858 and 1859-1865.
- P. 42. GRISI, GIULIA (1811-1869). MARIO (1810-1883). Italian operatic singers, were married in 1856. JENNY LIND (1820-1887), known familiarly as 'the Swedish nightingale,' famous soprano in opera and, later, in oratorio.

QUALITY

- P. 44. REACHING NOTHING DOWN. *I.e.* not making 'ready-made' shoes, but only 'to order.' 'Reach-me-downs' are ready-made or secondhand clothes.

- P. 45. ID IS AN ARDT! Gessler being a German, his foreign pronunciation of English is shown here by his confusing voiced and unvoiced pairs of consonants—*d* for *t* and *th* (brudder, dem), *t* for *d* (Goot), *b* for *p* (biece), *g* for *k* (or *c* hard like *k*) (greaked)—and also some fricatives—*z* for *s* (zend), *v* for *f* (virms), and *f* for *v* (lofe).
- P. 48. WITHOUT SHOWING ME ANY LEATHER. Note this quiet suggestion of Gessler's growing poverty.

THE BLACK GODMOTHER

- P. 55. OSMUNDA. A genus of swamp ferns.
- P. 59. IN A FINE TAKIN'. Dialect for 'in great excitement.'
- P. 60. ONCE BEEN BLOODED. Dogs that have once tasted the blood of live sheep are said to become incurable sheep-biters.
- P. 62. 'THE DEATH OF PROCRIS.' A painting in the National Gallery, London, by the Italian Piero di Cosimo. It represents the dead Procris—in Greek legend the wife of the hunter Cephalos, who killed her accidentally—with a dog seated at her feet looking down at her, while a faun bends over her head.

THE BROKEN BOOT

- P. 72. 'OUT.' *I.e.* out of employment.
- P. 73. *Mèche blanche*. A lock of white hair on an otherwise dark head of hair (French).
- P. 74. TWIG? Slang for 'do you see?'
- P. 76. ROCKY. Slang for 'in a shaky condition,' *i.e.* financially in this case.

ACME

- P. 80. 'LEARNED.' Lower class dialect for 'taught,' here used humorously.
- P. 81. OCTOROON. A person having one-eighth negro blood: a term applied in the United States and West Indies.
- P. 82. CREOLE. A person born and naturalised in the West Indies, but not of mixed blood, *i.e.* either pure European or pure negro. Here pure European.

- P. 82. *Carte blanche*. Full permission to do what he liked with the scenario. French for 'blank paper,' i.e. given to a person to fill in his own terms.

THE BUCKLES OF SUPERIOR DOSSET

- P. 90. A WARM MAN. A man well-to-do financially.
- P. 93. COCKY. Slang for 'conceited.'
- P. 95. IN SPITE OF ALL THE EXPENSE WE WERE TO HIM. An expression, now old-fashioned, meaning the reverse of what it would to-day, i.e. 'in spite of all the expense we were put to on his account.'
- P. 95. QUEER STREET. An imaginary street for queer people, especially such as are in an entangled position, particularly financially.
- P. 96. SAVED HIS BACON. I.e. avoided the loss of his money.
- P. 96. PULL THE CHESTNUTS OUT OF THE FIRE FOR HIM. Take over the burden of his bankruptcy in this case. Usually means to do someone else's dangerous or troublesome work for him, from the old story of the monkey who made the cat pull the chestnuts out of the fire, when they were roasted, to save the monkey from burning his own paws. Hence, also, the expression 'to make a cat's-paw of a person.'
- P. 97. THE THIRTIES, VERY HARD YEARS FOR EVERYBODY. The 1830's were years of severe financial depression, partly in consequence of the Napoleonic wars, which ended in 1815—a parallel often drawn with the present depression following on the World War.
- P. 98. PEGTOP TROUSERS. Slang term for trousers wide at the hips and narrow at the ankles.
- P. 99. 'I'M JIGGERED IF I WILL!' An oath with an uncertain origin, 'jigger' being either a prison-cell or an insect (found in the West Indies, Africa, and the United States) which burrows under the skin and causes intense irritation. Hence the meaning would be either 'I'll go to prison' or 'I'll be plagued with jiggers before I'll do it.'
- P. 100. FALLALS. Originally bits of finery, then any kind of affectation.

- P. 103. SOAMEY. Soames, son of James Forsyte, and central figure of the *Forsyte Saga*. There is irony in the following lines: 'so that he could build himself a house . . . only not—not with sea water,' for the house which Soames ultimately had built for himself brought the one great trouble into his life.

A SAD AFFAIR

- P. 105. YOUNG JOLYON. The Jolyon who received the buckles of Superior Dosset.
- P. 105. WHYTE-MELVILLE. George John Whyte-Melville (1827-1878), a minor novelist. The heroes of his novels are usually dashing sportsmen and young bucks of the upper classes. His best-known work, *Digby Grand*, was published in two volumes in 1853.
- P. 105. THE DRAG. Originally a private stage-coach with seats inside and out and drawn by four horses. Here the name of a sporting club for men interested in horse-driving and riding.
- P. 107. SCHOOLS. The University name for the examinations for B.A. at Oxford, also for any of the seven branches of specialised study at that University.
- P. 108. DESCENT TO AVERNUS. From the Latin epic poet Vergil, *facilis est descensus Averni*, meaning 'easy is the descent to Hades.'
- P. 110. 'TOSH.' Slang for a bath.
- P. 111. *Post equitem sedet atra cura*. Quotation from the Latin poet Horace, meaning 'behind the horseman sits black Care.'
- P. 112. DUNDREARYS. Long whiskers formerly worn hanging from the point of the jaw, a fashion set by the actor Sothorn (1826-1881) when playing the part of Lord Dundreary, a foolish but kindly nobleman in Tom Taylor's comedy *Our American Cousin* (1863).
- P. 113. 'FROUST.' College slang for an armchair.

REVOLT AT ROGER'S

- P. 124. LLOYD'S. Now known for world-wide marine insurance business.
- P. 124. RIVED. Obsolescent and elevated word for 'forcibly carried off,' here used with heroic-comic effect.

- P. 125. INTEGUMENTS. Used humorously for 'coverings.'
- P. 134. TIGER. A boy in smart livery acting as groom. He rode standing behind the phaeton on a small platform and holding on by a strap.
- P. 135. PROG. Slang for 'food.'
- P. 137. JEHU. An Old Testament character who, according to 2 Kings ix. 20, 'drove furiously.' Hence 'driving like Jehu' has become proverbial in English.

SOAMES AND THE FLAG

- P. 138. THE ASSASSINATIONS AT SERAJEVO. The heir apparent to the Austrian throne, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and his consort, were shot by a young Serb, Princip, while driving in procession through Serajevo, the chief town of Bosnia, in 1914 a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, now in Jugo-Slavia. Serbia's reply, a month later, at the end of July, to Austria's ultimatum over this murder was considered unsatisfactory and war was declared on Serbia. Russia supported Serbia, both being Slav nations, and Germany came in on the side of its German partner, Austria. France—allied with Russia—was the next to enter the war, and Germany's act in crossing Belgium to attack France brought in not only Belgium in self-defence, but also Great Britain in defence of the neutrality of Belgium, of which she was a guarantor along with France and Germany herself. All these declarations and acts of war followed in breathless succession in the ten days between July 24 (Friday) and August 4 (Tuesday). Japan, Italy, Roumania, Greece (1917), and other countries came in on the side of the Allies—as France, England, Russia and Belgium were called—and the U.S.A. also, in 1917. Turkey early—and Bulgaria later—joined the Central Powers, Germany and Austria-Hungary.
- P. 138. JAMES MARIS. Dutch painter, born 1837.
- P. 139. ANNETTE. Soames's second wife, a Frenchwoman. Fleur is their daughter.
- P. 142. RADICALS. The British Government was then Liberal, led by Mr. Asquith (later Lord Oxford and Asquith) as Prime Minister.

- P. 144. GREY. Sir Edward Grey, then Minister for Foreign Affairs and a close friend of Asquith.
- P. 145. THE HOUSE OF LORDS IN 1910. The dispute between the permanent Conservative majority in the House of Lords and the great Liberal majority in the Commons since 1906 had, by 1910, raised political feeling to fever-heat over the persistent rejection of Liberal bills by the Lords, ending in the rejection of a Liberal Finance Bill or Budget (1909), an unprecedented political act which brought about a constitutional crisis of the first magnitude, known then as *Peers v. The People* by the Liberals.
- P. 147. KITCHENER (1850-1916). In 1914 was British Agent and Consul-General in Egypt and at home on leave. He was recalled while actually on board a Channel boat returning to his post in Egypt on August 3, and was appointed Minister for War on August 6.
- P. 147. THE BLACK WEEK OF THE BOER WAR. In December 1899, when the Boers gained three successes—Magersfontein, Stormberg and Colenso—in one week.
- P. 147. ROBERTS (1832-1914). Lord Roberts, senior to Kitchener, had seen service as far back as the Indian Mutiny in 1857, when he gained the V.C. He became famous by the forced march he led from Kabul to Kandahar—10,000 men over 313 miles in 22 days—in the Afghan War of 1878-1879, and finally carried British arms to victory as Commander-in-Chief during the latter part of the Boer War in 1900.
- P. 148. JAPAN HAD BEATEN HER. In the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905, over the Russian occupation and fortification of Port Arthur in the Dairen Peninsula and her increasing influence over China and in the Far East, where Japan considered she had prescriptive rights—and still makes that claim.
- P. 149. THE ULTIMATUM SENT. Britain's ultimatum to Germany to withdraw from Belgium was to expire at midnight on August 3-4. Germany made no reply, so that Britain automatically was at war with Germany from that hour. No formal declaration of war was ever made against Austria—a traditional political friend of Britain—and we only met Austrian troops in the field for a short time and over a small area on the Italo-Austrian front.

- P. 162. MONS. The most famous of the early engagements between British and German troops took place outside the fortified Belgian town of Mons, where there was danger for a while that the British troops would be hemmed in.
- P. 162. THE BATTLE OF THE MARNE. Here the German advance on Paris was stopped, and the long years of trench-warfare began.
- P. 164. THE BOMBARDMENT OF SCARBOROUGH. On December 16, 1914, a German naval force crossed the North Sea, eluding the British Fleet during very heavy weather, and threw shells into Scarborough and the two Hartle-pools. One hundred and twenty civilians were killed and over four hundred wounded.
- P. 164. THE SINKING OF THE *Lusitania*. On May 7, 1915, this Atlantic liner was torpedoed by a German submarine without warning, causing a loss of 1198 men, women and children and nearly precipitating war between the U.S.A. and Germany.
- P. 166. THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND. The official report of this, the greatest sea-engagement of the War (May 31-June 1, 1916), opened in a depressing manner with losses of ships and men.
- P. 167. THE DEATH OF KITCHENER. On June 5, 1916, the cruiser *Hampshire*, carrying Lord Kitchener, struck a mine on the coast of the Orkneys and sank with all on board.
- P. 172. THE LANSDOWNE ATTITUDE. Lord Lansdowne, a Conservative leader, became prominent in 1917 for urging peace by agreement so as to end the horrible and apparently endless and useless slaughter on both sides.
- P. 172. THE BIG GERMAN 'PUSH.' This effort, in March 1918, was Germany's last bid for victory. Driving a deep wedge into the allied centre, their most advanced troops reached within a few miles of Paris.
- P. 174. TAKE THOSE SUBMARINES. From February 1915 the Germans declared the narrow seas around England a war zone and began sinking merchant ships by submarine. This was intensified after February 1, 1917, to what was called 'unrestricted submarine warfare,' meaning the sinking of allied merchant ships at sight and without

the warning that had been customary according to international law. This led to the severance of diplomatic relations by the United States and, on April 6, her entry into the War. During April 1917—the worst month of this warfare—196 British vessels, totalling nearly 600,000 tons, were sunk.

- P. 175. FOCH. Unity of command over all the allied forces on the Western Front, lack of which had been their great weakness, was achieved only in the last months of the War by the appointment of General (later Marshal) Foch as agreed Generalissimo.
- P. 176. GOYA. Famous Spanish painter (1746–1828).
- P. 177. THE PRADO. The great museum and art gallery of Madrid.
- P. 177. JOLYON AND IRENE. Young Jolyon, of *A Sad Affair*, had married Irene, the divorced first wife of Soames. Their son was also named Jolyon. When Fleur was born, Soames had hoped for a son.

Printed in England at THE BALLANTYNE PRESS by

SPOTTISWOODE, BALLANTYNE & CO. LTD.

Cochester, London & Bonn

Acc. No.

16038

